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ABSTRACT

This training aid is designed to guide an inservice teacher education session on re-engaging students in learning. It can also be used as a self-tutorial for group discussion. The aid offers key talking points for a short training session; a brief overview of the topic; fact sheets/practice notes (e.g., talking with kids, opening the classroom door to increase opportunities for re-engaging students, using volunteers, and creating caring classrooms and schools); tools and handouts (e.g., using a pre-referral intervention process to re-engage students in learning); and a sampling of other related information and resources (e.g., Quick Finds on student motivation, environments that support learning, and re-engaging students in learning, and a training tutorial on classroom changes to enhance and re-engage students in learning). Originals for overheads include barriers to learning, learner options to enhance motivation and learning, talking with kids, opening the classroom door to assistance and partnerships, and pre-referral intervention and student re-engagement in learning. (SM)

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A Center Quick Training Aid ....

Re-engaging Students in Learning

March, 2002

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The center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor and operates under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project, Dept. of Psychology, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563 Phone: (310) 825-3634.

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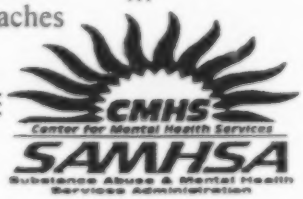
The UCLA Center approaches mental health and psychosocial concerns from the broad perspective of addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development. In particular, it focuses on comprehensive, multifaceted models and practices to deal with the many external and internal barriers that interfere with development, learning, and teaching. Specific attention is given policies and strategies that can counter marginalization and fragmentation of essential interventions and enhance collaboration between school and community programs. In this respect, a major emphasis is on enhancing the interface between efforts to address barriers to learning and prevailing approaches to school and community reforms.



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Quick Training Aids

Re-engaging Students in Learning

Periodically, windows of opportunities arise for providing inservice at schools about mental health and psychosocial concerns, When such opportunities appear, it may be helpful to access one of more of our Center's *Quick Training Aids*.

Each of these offer a brief set of resource to guide those providing an inservice session. (They also are a form of quick self-tutorial and group discussion.)

Most encompasses

- key talking points for a short training session
- a brief overview of the topic
- facts sheets
- tools
- a sampling of other related information and resources

In compiling resource material, the Center tries to identify those that represent "best practice" standards, If you know of better material, please **let us know** *so that we can make improvements.*

This set of training aids was designed for free online access and interactive learning. It can be used online and/or downloaded at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu - go to Quick Find and scroll down in the list of "Center Responses to Specific Requests" to *Classroom - Focused Enabling*. Besides this Quick Training Aid, you also will find a wealth of other resources on this topic.

Preface

In practice the adage: "Good teaching meets learners where they are" usually is interpreted as a call for *matching* a student's current *capabilities* (e.g., knowledge and skills). However, matching *motivation* is also essential. Such a motivational emphasis encompasses concerns about *intrinsic* motivation and overcoming avoidance motivation (see pages 10 and 11).

It is clear that the emphasis on matching capabilities is the prevalent orientation in the literature on teaching. Motivational considerations often are given short shrift. The irony, of course, is that most teachers recognize that motivational factors often play a key role in accounting for poor instructional outcomes. One of the most common laments among teachers is: "They could do it, if only they *wanted* to!" Teachers also know that good abilities are more likely to emerge when students are motivated not only to pursue class assignments but also are interested in using what they learn in other contexts.

Classrooms must be designed in ways that (a) stress the necessity of matching both motivation and capabilities and (b) encompass both regular instruction and specialized assistance. They must reflect an appreciation that learning and teaching are dynamic and nonlinear processes, that some learners experience problems that require use of something more than the best personalized instruction offers, and an appreciation of the importance of a caring context. The design must also be built with the recognition that teaching and enabling learning are not the teacher's responsibility alone. Good teaching requires collaboration among teachers and other staff at the school and is fostered or hindered by what takes place outside the school.

Mother to son: *Time to get up and go to school.*

Son: *I don't want to go. It's hard and the kids don't like me.*

Mother: *But you have to go - you're the teacher.*

Guide for Suggested Talking Points

I. Brief Overview

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A. Present main points from:
Re-Engaging Students in Learning at School - Excerpted from the Winter 2002 Addressing Barriers to Learning newsletter (Vol. 7, #1). 5

1. The introduction provides a brief description of what is happening in schools currently.
2. Note the section entitled "It's About Motivation - Especially Intrinsic Motivation," which provides information regarding matching individual differences in motivation.
3. Two Key Components of Motivation: Valuing and Expectations are discussed
4. Motivation theory is explored

B. Read More About it... Learner Options and Decision Making to Enhance Motivation and Learning. - Excerpt from Adelman H.S. & Taylor, L. (1993). Learning Problems and Learning Disabilities Moving Forward. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company. 11

1. This article examines the way in which classroom content and outcomes expand to provide a range of interesting options.

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1. These "practice notes" provide suggestions for engaging youngsters in productive dialogues.

B. Opening the Classroom Door to Increase Opportunities for Re-Engaging Students 23

1. These "practice notes" provide examples of opening the door to assistance and partnerships

C. Using Volunteers - "Practice notes" excerpted from *Volunteers to Help Teachers and School Address Barriers to Learning*. 24

1 These "practice notes" outline the benefits of using volunteers to help enhance a student's motivation and skills. Volunteers can also help counter the negative effects that arise when a student has a difficulty adjusting to school.

D. Creating Caring Classrooms & Schools 25

1 Learning and teaching are experienced most positively when the learner cares about learning and the teacher cares about teaching. These "practice notes" look at the elements in enhancing classroom approaches for addressing barriers to learning.

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E. Opening the Classroom Door to Assistance and Partnerships
F. Prereferral Intervention and Re-engaging Students in Learning

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UCLA SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

Addressing Barriers to Learning

New ways to think . . .
Better ways to link

Mental Health in Schools Center
Training and Technical Assistance

Volume 7, Number 1
Winter, 2002

I suspect that many children would learn arithmetic, and learn it better, if it were illegal.
John Holt

Re-engaging Students in Learning at School

Student disengagement in schooling is a fundamental barrier to well-being. Thus, re-engaging students in classroom learning must be a fundamental focus for all who are concerned about learning, behavior, and emotional problems.

A cornerstone of mental health in schools and other enterprises for addressing barriers to learning must incorporate strategies for *re-engaging* and then maintaining the engagement of students in classroom learning. This means that all of us must appreciate and do something about helping teachers address these matters. It is absolutely essential to do so if the phrase "leave no child behind" is to have real meaning.

An unfortunate reality is that strategies for ensuring no child is left behind differ in different schools. Take *teaching* for example. In general, teaching involves being able to apply strategies focused on content to be taught and knowledge and skills to be acquired – with some degree of attention given to the process of engaging students. This works fine in schools where most students come each day ready and able to deal with what the teacher is ready and able to teach. Indeed, teachers are blessed when they have a classroom where the majority of students show up and are receptive to the planned lessons.

In schools that are the greatest focus of public criticism, this certainly is not the case. What most of us realize, at least at some level, is that teachers in such settings are confronted with an entirely different teaching situation. Among the various supports they absolutely must have are ways to re-engage students who have become disengaged and often resistant to broad-band teaching approaches. To the dismay of most teachers, however, approaches for re-engaging students in *learning* rarely are a prominent part of pre or in-service preparation and seldom are the focus of strategies pursued by professionals whose role is to support teachers and students.

What is Happening in Schools Currently?

It is commonplace to find that, when a student is not engaged in the lessons at hand, the youngster may engage in activity that disrupts. Teachers and other staff try to cope. The emphasis is on classroom management. At one time, a heavy dose of punishment was the dominant approach. Currently, the stress is on more positive practices designed to provide "behavior support" (including a variety of out-of-the-classroom interventions). For the most part, however, the strategies are applied as a form of *social control* aimed directly at stopping disruptive behavior. An often stated assumption is that stopping the behavior will make the student amenable to teaching. In a few cases, this may be so. However, the assumption ignores all the work that has led to understanding *psychological reactance*. Moreover, it belies the reality that so many students continue to do poorly in terms of academic achievement and the fact that dropout rates continue to be staggering.

The argument sometimes is made that the above problems simply reflect the failure of the system to do a good job in implementing social control and other socialization practices. But, probably the more basic system failure is how little attention is directed at helping teachers engage and maintain the engage-ment of students in learning. And, when they encounter a student who has disengaged and is misbehaving, the need shouldn't be first and foremost on social control but on strategies that have the greatest likelihood of re-engaging the student in classroom learning.

It's About Motivation – Especially Intrinsic Motivation

Engaging and re-engaging students in learning, of

course, is the facet of teaching that draws on what is known about human motivation. What is widely taught as good strategies for dealing with student misbehavior seldom reflects what most of us intuitively understand about human motivation. In particular, intuitive understanding of the importance of intrinsic motivation gives way to over-dependence on reinforcement theory.

Let's review some basics. Learning is a result of the transactions between learner and environment. The essence of teaching is creating an environment that first can mobilize the learner to pursue the curriculum and then can maintain that mobilization, while effectively facilitating learning. And, when a student disengages, re-engagement in learning depends on use of interventions that reduce factors that interfere with and enhance those that increase interest and/or capability.

Of course, no teacher, parent, or counselor can control all the key motivational factors. Indeed, as interveners, we can actually affect only a relatively small segment of the physical environment and social context in which learning occurs. In doing so, we try to maximize the likelihood that opportunities to learn are a good fit with the current capabilities of a given student. And, we should also place the same emphasis on matching individual differences in motivation. This means, for example, attending to:

- ***Motivation as a readiness concern.*** Optimal performance and learning require motivational readiness. The absence of such readiness can cause and/or maintain problems. If a student does not have enough motivational readiness, strategies must be implemented to develop it (including ways to reduce avoidance motivation). Readiness should not be viewed in the old sense of waiting until an individual is interested. Rather, it should be understood in the contemporary sense of establishing environments that are perceived by students as caring, supportive places and as offering stimulating activities that are valued and challenging, and doable.

- ***Motivation as a key ongoing process concern.*** Many students are caught up in novelty when a subject is new, but after a few lessons, interest often wanes. Students may be motivated by the idea of obtaining a given outcome but may not be motivated to pursue certain processes and thus may not pay attention or may try to avoid them. Students may be motivated to start to work on overcoming their problems but may not maintain their motivation. Strategies must be designed to elicit, enhance, and maintain motivation so that a student stays mobilized.

- ***Minimizing negative motivation and avoidance reactions as process and outcome concerns.*** Teachers and others at a school not only must try to increase motivation – especially intrinsic motivation – but also take care to avoid or at least minimize conditions that decrease motivation or produce negative motivation. For example, care must be taken not to over-rely on extrinsics to entice and reward because to do so may decrease intrinsic motivation. At times, school is seen as unchallenging, uninteresting, overdemanding, overwhelming, overcontrolling, nonsupportive, or even hostile. When this happens, a student may develop negative attitudes and avoidance related to a given situation (and over time) related to school and all it represents.

- ***Enhancing intrinsic motivation as a basic outcome concern.*** It is essential to enhance motivation as an outcome so the desire to pursue a given area (e.g., reading) increasingly is a positive intrinsic attitude that mobilizes learning outside the teaching situation. Achieving such an outcome involves use of strategies that do not overrely on extrinsic rewards and that do enable students to play a meaningful role in making decisions related to valued options. In effect, enhancing intrinsic motivation is a fundamental *protective factor* and is the key to developing *resiliency*.

*Increasing intrinsic motivation involves affecting a student's thoughts, feelings, and decisions. In general, the intent is to use procedures that can potentially reduce negative and increase positive feelings, thoughts, and coping strategies with respect to learning. For learning and behavior problems, this means especially identifying and minimizing experiences that maintain or may increase avoidance motivation. This especially means avoiding processes that make students feel controlled and coerced, that limit the range of options with regard to materials, and that limit the **focus** to a day-in, day-out emphasis on problems to be remedied. Such processes are likely to produce avoidance reactions and thus reduce opportunities for positive learning and for development of positive attitudes.*

Two Key Components of Motivation: Valuing and Expectations

> *External reinforcement may indeed get a particular act going and may lead to its repetition, but it does not nourish, reliably, the long course of learning by which [one] slowly builds in [one's] own way a serviceable model of what the world is and what it can be.*
>
> Jerome Bruner

Two common reasons people give for not bothering to learn something are "It's not worth it" and "I know I won't be able to do it." In general, the amount of time and energy spent on an activity seems dependent on how much the activity is valued by the person and on the person's expectation that what is valued will be attained without too much cost.

About Valuing. What makes something worth doing? Prizes? Money? Merit awards? Praise? Certainly! We all do a great many things, some of which we don't even like to do, because the activity leads to a desired reward. Similarly, we often do things to escape punishment or other negative consequences that we prefer to avoid.

Rewards and punishments may be material or social. For those with learning, behavior, and emotional problems, there has been widespread use of such "incentives" (e.g., systematically giving points or tokens that can be exchanged for candy, prizes, praise, free time, or social interactions). Punishments have included loss of free time and other privileges, added work, fines, isolation, censure, and suspension. Grades have been used both as rewards and punishments. Because people will do things to obtain rewards or avoid punishment, rewards and punishment often are called *reinforcers*. Because they generally come from sources outside the person, they often are called *extrinsics*.

Extrinsic reinforcers are easy to use and can immediately affect behavior. Therefore, they have been widely adopted in the fields of special education and psychology. Unfortunately, the immediate effects are usually limited to very specific behaviors and often are short-term. Moreover, extensive use of extrinsics can have some undesired effects. And, sometimes the available extrinsics simply aren't powerful enough to get the desired results.

It is important to remember that what makes some extrinsic factor rewarding is the fact that it is experienced by the recipient as a reward. What makes it a highly valued reward is that the recipient highly values it. If someone doesn't like candy, there is not much point in offering it as a reward. Furthermore, because the use of extrinsics has limits, it's fortunate that people often do things even without apparent extrinsic reason. In fact, a lot of what people learn and spend time doing is done for intrinsic reasons. *Curiosity* is a good example. Curiosity seems to be an innate quality that leads us to seek stimulation, avoid boredom, and learn a great deal.

People also pursue some things because of what has been described as an innate *striving for competence*. Most of us value feeling competent. We try to conquer some challenges, and if none are around, we usually seek one out. Of course, if the challenges confronting us seem unconquerable or make us too uncomfortable (e.g., too anxious or exhausted), we try to put them aside and move on to something more promising.

Another important intrinsic motivator appears to be an internal push toward *self-determination*. People seem to value feeling and thinking they have some degree of choice and freedom in deciding what to do. And, human beings also seem intrinsically moved toward establishing and maintaining relationships. That is, we value the feeling of interpersonal connection.

About Expectations. We may value something a great deal; but if we believe we can't do it or can't obtain it without paying too great a personal price, we are likely to look for other valued activities and outcomes to pursue. Expectations about these matters are influenced by previous experiences.

Previously unsuccessful arenas usually are seen as unlikely paths to valued extrinsic rewards or intrinsic satisfactions. We may perceive past failure as the result of our lack of ability; or we may believe that more effort was required than we were willing to give. We may also feel that the help we needed to succeed was not available. If our perception is that very little has changed with regard to these factors, our expectation of succeeding now will be rather low.

> *In general, then, what we value interacts with our expectations, and motivation is one product of this interaction* (see next page).

There are many intervention implications for all staff to derive from understanding intrinsic motivation. For example, mobilizing and maintaining student motivation depends on how a classroom program addresses concerns about valuing and expectations. Schools and classrooms that offer a broad range of opportunities (e.g., content, outcomes, procedural options) and involve students in decision making are best equipped to meet the challenge.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

A Bit of Theory

Motivation theory has many facets. At the risk of over simplifying things, the following discussion is designed to make a few big points.

E x V

Can you decipher this? (Don't go on until you've tried.)

Hint: the "x" is a multiplication sign.

In case the equation stumped you, don't be surprised. The main introduction to motivational thinking that many people have been given in the past involves some form of reinforcement theory (which essentially deals with extrinsic motivation). Thus, all this may be new to you, even though motivational theorists have been wrestling with it for a long time, and intuitively, you probably understand much of what they are talking about.

"E" represents an individual's *expectations* about outcome (in school often this is about expectations of success or failure). "V" represents *valuing*, with valuing influenced by both intrinsic values and extrinsic reinforcers, albeit in a somewhat less than intuitive way. Thus, in a general sense, motivation can be thought of in terms of expectancy times valuing. *Such theory recognizes that human beings are thinking and feeling organisms and that intrinsic factors can be powerful motivators. This understanding of human motivation has major implications for learning, teaching, parenting, and mental health interventions.*

Within some limits (which we need not discuss here), high expectations and high valuing produce high motivation, while low expectations (E) and high valuing (V) produce relatively weak motivation.

> David greatly values the idea of improving his reading. He is unhappy with his limited skills and knows he would feel a lot better about himself if he could read. But, as far as he is concerned, everything his reading teacher asks him to do is a waste of time. He's done it all before, and he *still* has a reading problem. Sometimes he will do the exercises, but just to earn points to go on a field trip and to avoid the consequences of not cooperating. Often, however, he tries to get out of doing his work by distracting the teacher. After all, why should he do things he is certain won't help him read any better.
>
> *(Expectancy x Valuing = Motivation 0 x 1.0 = 0)*

High expectations paired with low valuing also yield low approach motivation. Thus, the oft-cited remedial strategy of guaranteeing success by designing tasks to be very easy is not as simple a recipe as it sounds. Indeed, the approach is likely to fail if the outcome (e.g., improved reading, learning math fundamentals, applying social skills) is not valued or if the tasks are experienced as too boring or if doing them is seen as too embarrassing. In such cases, a strong negative value is attached to the activities, and this contributes to avoidance motivation.

(Expectancy x Valuing = Motivation 1.0 x 0 = 0)

> *Motivation is not something that can be determined solely by forces outside the individual. Others can plan activities and outcomes to influence motivation and learning; however, how the activities and outcomes are experienced determines whether they are pursued (or avoided) with a little or a lot of effort and ability. Appropriate appreciation of this fact is necessary in designing a match for optimal learning and performance.*

Overreliance on Extrinsics: A Bad Match

A growing appreciation of the importance of a student's perceptions has led researchers to important findings about some undesired effects resulting from overreliance on extrinsics. Would offering you a reward for reading this material make you more highly motivated? Maybe. But a reward might also reduce your motivation for pursuing the topic in the future. Why might this happen? You might perceive the proposed reward as an effort to control your behavior. Or you may see it as an indication that the activity needs to be rewarded to make you want to do it. Such perceptions may start you thinking and feeling differently about what you have been doing. For example, you may start to resent the effort to control or bribe you. Or you may begin to think there must be something wrong with the activity if someone has to offer a reward for doing it. Also, later you may come to feel that the topic is not worth pursuing any longer because no reward is being offered.

Any of these thoughts and feelings may cause you to shift the intrinsic value you originally placed on learning about the topic. The point is that extrinsic rewards can undermine intrinsic reasons for doing things. Although this may not always be a bad thing, it is an important consideration in deciding to rely on extrinsic reinforcers.

Because of the prominent role they play in school programs, grading, testing, and other performance evaluations are a special concern in any discussion of the overreliance on extrinsics as a way to reinforce positive learning. Although grades often are discussed as simply providing information about how well a student is doing, many, if not most, students perceive each grade as a reward or a punishment.

The point for emphasis here is that engaging and re-engaging students in learning involves matching motivation. Matching motivation requires an appreciation of the importance of a student's perceptions in determining the right mix of intrinsic and extrinsic reasons. It also requires understanding the key role played by expectations related to outcome.

Rewards -- To Control or Inform?

As Ed Deci has cogently stressed:

> Rewards are generally used to control behavior. Children are sometimes rewarded with candy when they do what adults expect of them. Workers are rewarded with pay for doing what their supervisors want. People are rewarded with social approval or positive feedback for fitting into their social reference group. In all these situations, the aim of the reward is to control the person's behavior -- to make him continue to engage in acceptable behaviors. And rewards often do work quite effectively as controllers. Further, whether it works or not, each reward has a controlling aspect. Therefore, the first aspect to every reward (including feedback) is a controlling aspect. However, rewards also provide information to the person about his effectiveness in various situations. . . . When David did well at school, his mother told him she was proud of him, and when Amanda learned to ride a bike, she was given a brand new two-wheeler. David and Amanda knew from the praise and bicycle that they were competent and self-determining in relation to school and bicycling. The second aspect of every reward is the information it provides a person about his competence and self-determination.
>
> When the controlling aspect of the reward is very salient, such as in the case of money or the avoidance of punishment, [a] change in perceived locus of causality . . . will occur. The person is "controlled" by the reward and s/he perceives that the locus of causality is external.

Re-Engagement in School Learning

For motivated students, facilitating learning is a fairly straightforward matter and fits well with school improvements that primarily emphasize enhancing instructional practices. The focus is on helping establish ways for students who are motivationally ready and able to achieve and, in the process, maintain and hopefully enhance their motivation. The process involves knowing when, how, and what to teach and also knowing when and how to structure the situation so they can learn on their own. However, students who manifest learning, behavior, and/or emotional problems often have developed extremely negative perceptions of teachers, programs, and school in general. Any effort to re-engage these students must begin by recognizing such perceptions. That is, the first step in addressing the problem is for the school leadership to acknowledge its nature and scope. Then, school support staff and teachers must work together to pursue a major initiative focused on re-engaging those who have become disengaged and reversing conditions that led to the problem.

Given appropriate commitment in policy and practice, there are four general strategies we recommend for all working with disengaged students (e.g., teachers, support staff, administrators):

Clarifying student perceptions of the problem – Talk openly with students about why they have become disengaged so that steps can be planned for how to alter the negative perceptions of disengaged students and

Reframing school learning – In the case of those who have become disengaged, it is unlikely that they will be open to schooling that looks like "the same old thing." Major changes in approach are required if they are even to perceive that anything has changed. Minimally, exceptional efforts must be made to have these students (a) view the teacher as supportive (rather than controlling and indifferent) and (b) perceive content, outcomes, and activity options as personally valuable and obtainable. It is important, for example, to eliminate threatening evaluative measures; reframe content and processes to clarify purpose in terms of real life needs and experiences and underscore how it all builds on previous learning; and clarify why procedures can be effective – especially those designed to help correct specific problems.

Renegotiating involvement in school learning – New and mutual agreements must be developed and evolved over time through conferences with the student and where appropriate including parents. The intent is to affect perceptions of choice, value, and probable outcome. The focus throughout is on clarifying awareness of valued options, enhancing expectations of positive outcomes, and engaging the student in meaningful, ongoing decision making. For the process to be most effective, students should be assisted in sampling new processes and content, options should include valued enrichment opportunities, and there must be provision for reevaluating and modifying decisions as perceptions shift. In all this, it is essential to remember that effective decision making is a basic skill (as fundamental as the three Rs). Thus, if a student does not do well initially, this is not a reason to move away from student involvement in decision making. Rather, it is an assessment of a need and a reason to use the process not only for motivational purposes but also to improve this basic skill.

Reestablishing and maintaining an appropriate working relationship (e.g., through creating a sense of trust, open communication, providing support and direction as needed).

In applying the above strategies, maintaining re-engagement and preventing disengagement requires a continuous focus on:

- ensuring that the processes and content minimize threats to feelings of competence, self-determination, and relatedness to valued others, maximize such feelings, and highlight accomplishments (included here is an emphasis on a school enhancing public perception that it is a welcoming, caring, safe, and just institution)
- guiding motivated practice (e.g., providing opportunities for meaningful applications and clarifying ways to organize practice)
- providing continuous information on learning and performance
- providing opportunities for continued application and generalization (e.g., ways in which students can pursue additional, self-directed learning or can arrange for additional support and direction)

Obviously, it is no easy task to decrease well-assimilated negative attitudes and behaviors. And, the task is likely to become even harder with the escalation toward high-stakes testing policies (no matter how well-intentioned). It also seems obvious that, *for many schools, enhanced achievement test scores will only be feasible when the large number of disengaged students are re-engaged in learning at school.*

Key Challenges for Support Staff, Teachers, & Administrators

- Minimize student disengagement and maximize re-engagement by moving school culture toward a greater focus on intrinsic motivation
- Minimize psychological reactance and enhance perceptions that lead to re-engagement in learning at school by rethinking social control practices

Resource and Training Aids

The Center has developed a set of continuing education modules and an accompanying set of readings and tools entitled: *Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling.* Facets of these modules are incorporated into a Training Tutorial entitled: *Classroom Changes to Enhance & Re-engage Students in Learning* and a forthcoming Quick Training Aid on re-engaging students. These are downloadable at no cost from the website: http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu or ordered as hard copy. Also, you will find many resources relevant to this topic on the website's Quick Find search. And, you can access other related resources through the Center's "Gateway to a World of Resources."

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Read more about it . . .

LEARNER OPTIONS AND DECISION MAKING TO ENHANCE MOTIVATION AND LEARNING

If Maria dreams of being a musician and wants to spend time learning more about music, is this an option? If David's great passion is collecting baseball cards and memorizing facts and statistics about the game, can his program include a project focusing on baseball? James is curious about electronics, but he doesn't want to take a standard electric shop course because making buzzers and one-tube radios seems pretty far removed from television and computers. Can he have time to explore the topic in ways that uniquely interest him?

And if Maria, David, and James are allowed to pursue such content, what outcomes (skills, knowledge, and attitudes) and what level of competence (budding awareness -- moderate levels of mastery) should be expected from their activity?

Content and Outcome Options

From a motivational perspective, the answers to such questions are reasonably clear. Learners should be able to explore content that has personal value. In the process, they should be helped to pursue outcomes and levels of competence that reflect their continuing interest and effort (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Stipeck, 1988).

Most individuals will find personal reasons for acquiring basic skills and information while exploring intrinsically valued content. For example, the more James pursues his interest in electronics, the more he will discover that he needs to improve his reading and math skills. Thus, his ongoing exploration of electronics can indirectly lead to a personal desire to improve math and reading as he comes to view these skills as a means to his ends -- rather than as something everyone else wants him to do.

There are three ways in which classroom content and outcomes can be readily expanded to provide a broad range of interesting options. The first involves expanding options to include a wide sampling of topics that are currently popular with the majority of the students (see Feature 1). The second way involves asking students, especially those who still think there are too few positive options, to identify additional topics they would like to have included. Third, there are options the teacher identifies as important and worthwhile, which hopefully can be introduced in ways that expand student interests.

The more severe the student's learning problem, the more that variations from established content and outcomes can be argued as worth offering to mobilize and maintain the student's motivation. Indeed, with a severe motivation problem, it may be necessary to include options not usually offered to such students (e.g., auto mechanics, video production, photography, work experiences).

Even more controversial may be the necessity to allow such students to "opt out" of certain content courses (e.g., reading, math) for a while. This occurs most frequently with students whose failures have led them to strongly avoid particular subjects.

Along with strong dislikes, students with motivation problems often have an area of strong interest that can be made the focus of their program. The intent in doing so is to allow a youngster to explore some intriguing area in depth and in ways that uniquely interest him or her.

Actually, such a comprehensive discovery oriented project can be a useful option when any student wants to learn a great deal more about a topic. Projects give an intrinsic sense of form, direction, and immediacy to learning. (Any of the examples in Feature 1 may be undertaken as a project.)

Moreover, in pursuing comprehensive projects, students not only can discover more about a specific content area, they can also rediscover the personal value of improving reading, language, and other basic skills. After all, what makes certain skills "basic" is that they are necessary for pursuing many interests and tasks in daily living. When students come to understand this, they often develop a renewed interest in learning such basic skills.

Feature 1: **Popular Content Options**

The following topics have been extremely popular with the majority of students with whom we work. Although the topic may be one that is regularly taught in schools, the reference here is not to a set curriculum. Students usually are interested in how a topic relates to the world as they know it, or they are intrigued with some exotic subtopic. They do not want to pursue a set curriculum.

- Animals – care, training, and breeding; incubating chickens; learning about prehistoric and exotic animals and about those who live in special climates
- Arts and crafts – expressive drawing and painting, constructing and building, exploring the work of others
- Career and vocation – adolescents, in particular, often want presentations about opportunities to observe jobs that may be worth pursuing
- Computers – basic uses, graphics, language and logic
- Consumer activity – comparing prices, learning about false advertising and advertise gimmicks, learning how to find a particular product
- Cooking to eat and sell – food planning, purchasing, and preparation keyed to specific interests of the students involved
- Creative writing – fiction and poetry
- Cultures of other peoples – comparing the way one lives with how others live (e.g., rituals, beliefs, music, food, dress, art, education)
- Design – graphics, drafting, architecture, construction
- Drama – writing plays; acting, staging performances; observing and criticizing TV, film, and stage productions; learning more about favorite people and current trends in theater, film, and TV
- Driving – most teens have a strong interest in preparing for driving
- Health and safety – first aid, CPR, personal care, sex education
- History – specific events such as invention of the automobile, space exploration, World War II; the background to a current event, such as the turmoil in the Mideast
- Math puzzles and measurement – number and graph puzzlers; how to handle one's money; how to keep records on material related to one's hobby; how to measure in pursuing a particular interest, such as model building, wood construction, cooking, sewing, computers, video; how to compare sizes and weights; creative activities using math
- Motor trends – almost everything related to cars and motorcycles has proved to be of interest to one student or another
- Music – learning to play an instrument or sing, reading music, composing, learning more about favorite people and trends, reviewing and critiquing
- Newspaper and yearbook publication – all facets of planning, preparing, and distributing publications
- Photography – camera operations, picture composition, darkroom skills, creating interesting effects, displays
- Private enterprise/running a business – establishing and running a small business for profit at school, such as a small food service or offering for sale products that are made on the premises
- Psychology – learning more about the views of others in one's immediate environment, understanding why specific individuals and groups behave as they do
- Science – underwater creatures and plants, especially those that can be seen by scuba diving; electricity, especially as used in everyday life; chemical reactions; personal anatomy and biology; current events in science and medicine
- Space – other planets, space travel, constructing and flying rockets
- Sports – learning more about the present and past of favorite personalities, events, and equipment; learning to coach or referee
- Travel – learning what's interesting to visit locally and what's worth seeing in other countries, planning and taking trips, learning to use public transportation; learning about travel aids and skills such as map reading
- Video – writing, producing, acting, directing, camera work, editing
- Work experience – some students want to include work experience as part of their school program in order to earn needed money or to feel a sense of competence

A major concern in expanding options is that additional materials usually are needed. This concern can be minimized by asking those interested in the option to help gather the desired materials. (When topics are popular, several class members usually can be mobilized.)

In general, the many options illustrated here suggest that rather than going "back to basics" it may be better to go "forward to basics" by enabling students to rediscover intrinsic reasons for learning such skills. While we're discussing the matter, we also should reemphasize that there has been a broadening of current views about what is and isn't a basic skill. There is more to coping with everyday situations than having competence to use the three Rs. Another prominent set of basic skills that students need, for instance, is the ability to interact positively in social situations.

Calls for "back to basics" underscore the fact that there is always a conflict between required curriculum content and topics that have contemporary interest and are popular. From a motivational perspective, it would be nice if a way were found to achieve some sort of satisfactory balance. This might result in a decrease in time devoted to the established curriculum but, hopefully, also would increase positive attitudes toward learning and school. Even if such a balance seems unnecessary for most students, it does appear justified in cases of learning problems, since the established curriculum has proved not to be effective.

Process and Structure Options

Content, of course, interacts with processes. An exciting presentation can make a topic really come to life. As with content and outcomes, there are three ways in which process options can be readily expanded -- by adding procedures that are widely popular, by adding those of special interest to specific students, or by adding those newly identified by the teacher.

Again, we stress that students who have learning problems will have had negative experiences with a variety of instructional processes. Therefore, it is necessary to show them there are good alternatives to the procedures that led to their failures. For example, in pursuing projects, students with reading problems cannot be expected initially to rely heavily on reading. Visual- or audiovisual-oriented material, such as picture books and magazines, films and filmstrips, records, videotapes and audiotapes, field trips, teacher and other student presentations -- all can be used. Products can include some written and some dictated material, along with artwork (drawings, graphs, model constructions, photographs, collages) and oral presentations.

James, for example, failed a seventh-grade social studies class and was scheduled to repeat it. The curriculum content for the course consists of specific historical, political, and cultural events and some basic geography. At the end of the course, students are expected at least to be able to identify the events and geographical features covered and to use source materials (atlas, almanac, encyclopedia, card catalogue) for finding additional historical and geographical material. More ambitiously, the intent is to equip students with the knowledge to analyze and discuss significant past events and relate them to life today.

The class James failed used primarily the following procedures:

- Each week the teacher assigned a chapter to be read and questions to be answered and turned in; then, there was a multiple choice, true-false test on the material at the end of the week.
- In class each day, the teacher spoke about the material covered in the text and had the students take turns sharing their answers to the assigned questions. Once a week they practiced looking up assigned material in atlases, almanacs, etc. Once a month they went to the library to learn how to use its resources.
- During the year, each student was to present four current events to the class on topics relevant to the material being discussed.
- Three times during the school year, films were shown.
- Students who wanted extra credit could do a special term paper chosen from a list of topics the teacher had prepared or could choose three books from a prepared list and do reports on them.
- Grades were based primarily on test scores and extra credit work. However, grades were lowered when current event presentations or answers to the assigned reading questions were poor.
- When students, such as James, were found to be having difficulty, the teacher recommended that the parents spend more time helping with homework or find a tutor.

Because James failed the class, it seems reasonable to consider the procedures as not a good match for him. Indeed, if in repeating the course he was confronted with the same processes, it would not be surprising if his behavior reflected a good deal of avoidance motivation. What would a set of alternative procedures look like? An example is provided in Feature 2 (also see Feature 3).

Feature 2 : **Offering Alternative Processes for the Same Content**

A teacher using a topic exploration approach might proceed as follows:

- Rather than assign material, the teacher prepares ten varied topics covering the course content. He also identifies a long list of activities for pursuing such topics, each of which includes use of the desired basic research skills.
- At the beginning of the course, the teacher uses the first few classes to explain the ten varied topics and to help the students explore and choose from them.

He explains that each student can choose one or more topics and can choose from among a wide range of activities in learning about a topic. He also notes that each student can choose to work on a topic alone or in a small group. To help students get a good idea of the choices, he uses pictorial aids, an overhead projector, and filmstrips. The bulletin boards contain a variety of materials, such as pictures of other places and other times, historic newspaper clippings, and brief descriptions relevant to understanding the topics and activities being explored. There also are examples of what students have done in the past. A variety of pertinent reading material at different reading levels (magazines, pamphlets, fiction, and different texts) have been placed on the shelves and some opened for display. The teacher encourages the students to get up and look through the materials and to talk about the various alternatives. He answers questions as they arise. Finally, the teacher asks if any of the students have any relevant and feasible topics and activities they would like to have added. The one guideline he invokes is that groups have no more than four members.

- After aiding the students in choosing their topics and related activities, the teacher meets during class times with groups and individuals to assist and provide support and resources as they pursue their topics.
- Throughout the year, students share what they have learned about their topics with each other. (For example, one group studying how the effects of slavery are still felt in current race relations performs a play they have written. Another group studying the western movement in the United States forms a wagon train to experience the process and problems involved in undertaking such a trek [budgeting, buying supplies, dealing with changes in the weather, surviving harsh terrains]; they report their progress and adventures periodically to the rest of the class. One student chose to study the development and forms of money used from ancient times to the present and, as soon as the information is gathered, reports on each historical stage. Another student decided to learn research skills by tracing her "roots", she not only shares her family history with the class but also is able to tell the others about a wide range of available historical resource material.)
- To link the material together and cover anything that might be missed, the teacher prepares a series of periodic presentations (lectures, films, video) and related supplementary reading and discussions.
- Each student turned in a written progress report summarizing what he or she had learned about the topic at the end of each month. Multiple-choice, true-false, and essay exams were given at midyear and at the end of the year. The reports and exams were used to evaluate how well the students had learned what the course was intended to teach. Students who had trouble reading or writing were given the exams orally. Grades were based on a combination of effort and performance.

Besides specific processes, there is the matter of structure. Maria, David, James, and Matt need and want different amounts of support, direction, and external control (or limit setting) to help them learn. They have each identified some things they can readily do on their own, but they know there are tasks and situations they will handle better with help. To have their changing needs matched, they must have the option of working alone or seeking support and guidance as often as is appropriate.

It is to be expected, of course, that those with the lowest motivation are likely to need the most support and guidance. At the same time, they are likely not to seek help readily. Moreover, those with avoidance motivation tend to react negatively to structure they perceive as used to control them.

In general, a greater range of options with regard to content, outcome, process, and structure are required for those with motivation problems. We will return to this topic after stressing the importance of options designed to enrich the experience of schooling and living.

Enrichment, Discovery, Inquiry, and Serendipity

As important as specific planning is, it is a mistake for school programs to overprescribe the specifics of what and how to learn. There must be time for sampling and exploring unscheduled topics and activities. This, of course, assumes there are interesting things available to investigate. The time for exploring can be viewed as an enrichment opportunity.

Some remedial programs are much too preoccupied with a student's problems and the tasks that must be pursued in remedying them. When this happens, enrichment experiences tend to be ignored and the learning environment takes on an air of pathology, drudgery, and boredom -- all of which are contrary to enhancing motivation.

The mod provided by programs for the gifted is a good example of the type of environment that may have a positive motivational impact on any learner. Such programs offer a rich set of learning centers that focus on topics such as those listed in Feature 1 and on many more. Enrichment activities are useful for enhancing motivation and reducing negative behavior and, of course, can lead to important learning.

Feature 3: **Different Processes/Outcomes**

In recent years, there has been a major push for greater accountability in education. Everyone agrees that school programs should be more effective. But not everyone agrees with the extreme emphasis on highly specific objectives as advocated by some evaluators, especially when such evaluation ignores the processes used to reach desired objectives.

Some evaluators have even gone so far as to say they don't care what means are used as long as the ends are achieved. This extremist view ignores a simple fact: although two procedures may accomplish the same set of narrow objectives, they also may produce a variety of other different outcomes.

Take the approach used with James and the one described in Feature 2, for example. A motivational perspective suggests the two courses may lead to very different attitudes about the material learned. Lecture/text/test approaches tend to produce a distaste for social studies, history, geography, and similar subjects and for those who teach them. Moreover, teachers who teach in this way find little satisfaction in the process other than the sense of having pulled another group of students through.

In contrast, exploratory approaches lend themselves much better to personalization of learning and thus to the fostering and enhancement of intrinsic motivation along with the learning of specific content and skills. Moreover, students and teachers seem to find many personal satisfactions (i.e., valued learning and special friendships).

Although enrichment activities may be seen as a frill for many students, it is seen as important, motivationally, for students with learning problems. The richer the learning environment, the more likely students will discover a variety of new interests, information, and skills.

From a motivational perspective, enrichment options are not designed to teach specific information and skills. There are, of course, specific, and often predictable, outcomes that come from contact with any topic. However, almost by definition, an enrichment option produces many incidental and unpredictable (serendipitous) outcomes.

Furthermore, enrichment activities are not designed to operate as if everything a student learns is taught by the teacher. The "hands-on" nature of enrichment centers encourages independent exploration, experimentation, and learning. As questions arise, students can choose to use whatever information or help is available.

In the end, what students learn depends a great deal on their interests and effort. Some may decide to pursue a topic in great depth and to acquire a good deal of mastery over it; others may simply dabble and gain a surface awareness, which they may or may not follow up on later.

As a general strategy, enrichment opportunities can be established by offering an attractive set of discovery and inquiry centers and helping the students explore the materials and ideas. Let's look at Maria's experience with an enriched program.

> Maria's teacher explains that there are a variety of centers in the room which will change as the school year progresses. At the moment, there are centers dealing with electricity, tropical fish, computers, chemical reactions, African cultures, creative math, and many more. In order to offer a variety of centers each week, some are offered twice and some three times a week.
>
> Maria is given a chance to sample the centers. She then is given the opportunity to choose one or two topics that really interest her. It is made clear that these are "electives" and that she can drop out at any time.
>
> Maria is attracted to the tropical fish. She wants to know if it is hard to take care of them. She thinks she'd like to have some at home. Where do you buy them? Are they expensive? How long do they live? The teacher answers a few of her questions and then points out that there is a group meeting on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. They are learning all about where the fish come from, which can live with each other, how to breed them, and whatever else the group wants to explore about aquariums and fish.
>
> Maria is intrigued but a little suspicious. She wants to know if the activity includes reading or other assignments and tests. The answer is an unequivocal no. She can come and learn whatever she wants, in the way that she wants, and no one will ask her to prove anything. It is her questions that are important – not the teacher's.
>
> It is all so inviting that Maria decides to give it a try. And she finds it's as good as it looks and sounds. As she attends regularly, it becomes evident to all who observe her that she is a bright, interested, and attentive learner whenever she is motivated by the topic. She remembers what she has learned and works well with others.
>
> Not long after joining the group, her teacher notices Maria has gone to the library and checked out picture books on tropical fish. A few days later, Maria approached her to ask for a little help in reading some of the captions.

Options for Those with Motivation Problems

The first sep in working with such students involves exploration to find what the individual's interests are: Sports? Rock music? Movies? Computer games? Such personal interests are used as a starting point. A student's interests are explored until he or she identifies a related topic, no matter how unusual, that he or she would like to learn more about (see Feature 4).

After identifying a topic, learning activity options are reviewed to find those that are a good match with the student's needs, interests, and styles. For example, talkative students may prefer to work in small discussion groups. Other students will want a work area that is private and quiet. Students with high activity levels may choose to work with manipulable materials. Most will prefer to work on time-limited activities.

In accommodating a wider range of behaviors, classroom rules and standards are redefined to accept behaviors such as nondisruptive talking and movement about the classroom. For some individuals, certain "bad manners" (e.g., some rudeness, some swear words) and eccentric mannerisms (e.g., strange clothing and grooming) may have to be tolerated initially.

The most basic process option, of course, is that of not participating at times or at all.

> There are times when David simply doesn't feel like working. He wants the option of drawing, playing a game, or resting for about an hour. There are days when Maria doesn't want to go to school. And there came a day when James concluded he was ready to drop out of school.

Which, if any, of these should be offered as options? For whom?

Feature 4: **Options for Students with Motivation Problems**

Harry comes to school with no intention of working on what his teachers have planned. He will spend as much time as he can get away with talking with his friends and looking for some excitement to make the time pass faster. He is frequently in the middle of whatever trouble is occurring. Everyone is waiting for him to do something bad enough that he can be removed from his present class.

There is an alternative to letting this tragedy run its course. Time can be spent helping Harry identify one area of personal interest that he would like to learn more about (e.g., pop culture, rock music, current teenage fashions). Then, a personalized program can be developed based on a topic he would like to explore and ways he would like to explore it.

Approached in this way, most students like Harry will identify a topic and activities that interest them. However, one topic and a few activities won't fill up much time – perhaps an hour, maybe less. What then?

Well, Harry could be asked to pursue a regular program for the rest of the school day; but the odds are that he would simply resume his previous pattern of negative behavior. In the long run, this would probably defeat what the alternative program is trying to accomplish.

Our solution to the problem is as simple as it is controversial. We have students such as Harry attend school only for that period of time during which they have planned a program they intend to pursue. Our reasoning is twofold: (1) we know that students tend to work best when they are working on what they have identified as desirable, and (2) for students like Harry, it seems likely the rest of the time is wasted, including getting into trouble. Obviously, if they are not at school a full day, they are less likely to get into as much trouble. But, more important, the less we are in the position of coercing them, the less we are likely to cause the variety of reactive misbehaviors that characterize such students. Moreover, we find that once we no longer have to do battle with them, many youngsters evolve an increasing range of academic interests, including renewed interest in becoming competent in the areas of reading and writing. The energy they had been devoting to fighting teachers and school may now be redirected to exploring what it is they are interested in doing for themselves. As Harry's range of interests increase, he will want a longer school day and is likely to make better use of it.

We recognize the many practical, economic, and legal problems involved in cutting back on the length of a student's school day. However, we think these problems must be contrasted with the costs to society and individuals of ignoring the fact that for certain students a lengthy school day interferes with correcting their problems. Indeed, in some cases, it only makes the problems worse.

For older students, of course, a shortened day paired with a parttime job or apprenticeship may be a most productive experience. Among the results of work experiences can be an increased feeling of self-worth and competence and enhanced intrinsic motivation toward overcoming learning problems. A job also can provide a student with a source of income, which may be needed, and can even help to establish career directions.

At this point, you may think that such options are too inappropriate even to consider. However, as you reflect on what you have been learning and as you move on to read more about learner decision making, hopefully, it will be clear that the type of options discussed are fundamental to addressing motivational differences.

Decisions about *participation* are the primary foundation upon which all other decisions rest (Adelman, et al., 1984; Taylor, et al., 1985). If the individual initially does not want to participate or subsequently comes to that point of view, all other decisions become highly problematic.

For students diagnosed as having learning disabilities, the decision process related to participation begins with the discussions about placement. Whether a student with problems is placed in a special program or maintained in

regular classes, the immediate motivational concern always is whether the individual has decided that the program is right for him or her. And, of course, even if the initial answer is yes, the student's perceptions of the situation may change. Thus, decisions about placement must be continuously reevaluated.

The next most basic decisions are those related to *specific program options*. The objective is to help the student pinpoint alternatives that match personal interests and capabilities. Again, initial decisions have to be modified in keeping with changes in the students' perceptions of what is a good match.

As the following discussion illustrates, the best decision making processes include opportunities to physically explore and sample options. Thus, all initial decisions can be seen simply as extended opportunities to investigate options.

In overcoming severe motivational problems, it appears important not to insist that a student continue to work in areas she or he wants to avoid. This strategy is intended to reduce the type of psychological and behavioral reactions that occur when individuals think they are being forced to do something they don't want to do. In particular, we don't want to increase avoidance, either in the form of withdrawal (including passive performance) or of active resistance (e.g., disruptive behavior).

Thus, if a student initially indicates not wanting instruction in a specific area, it seems wise to hold off instruction temporarily -- even in basic skills, such as reading or math. The time is better spent on activities that may eventually lead to renewed interests in the avoided area.

Not providing instruction as a step in renewing positive interest in an area seems to go against common sense. We recognize that this is a controversial and, for some, an alarming strategy. It is not one to be adopted lightly or naively, and remember, it is a strategy to deal with motivation problems. From a motivational perspective, it is clearly rational to pursue areas of positive interest. And the case can be made that to focus solely on positive interests may be the best way to eventually overcome motivation and skill problems related to reading and other basics.

Let's look at Maria in this context.

> Maria doesn't want reading instruction. The teacher agrees to set her reading program aside for now. If reading were completely ignored, the best outcome the teacher should expect is that Maria's avoidance motivation would not be significantly increased. For many persons, this might be an acceptable outcome with regard to art and music and other areas not seen as basic skills. It would not be acceptable to most people when it comes to the three Rs. Fortunately, what makes basic literacy skills basic is that most facets of daily living involve their application. Moreover, the fact that they are designated as basic makes them a major point of focus by almost everyone in the society.
>
> Thus, it is likely that most of what Maria chooses to learn about at school and much of her other experiences will lead to frequent natural encounters that cause her to realize that she has a personal need for such skills. And, of course, these daily encounters inevitably bring her into contact with people who convey to her their assumption that she already has or is in the process of acquiring such skills. These experiences affect her feelings and attitudes about acquiring basics.
>
> As Maria's intrinsic awareness of the value of basic skills increases, she can be helped to learn any specific skills she identifies as needed in coping with natural encounters. Eventually, Maria should arrive at a level of motivational readiness at which she will accept the teacher's offer to pick up with formal reading instruction. Equally important, if her intrinsic motivation has increased enough, the time she spends reading may be considerably greater than the time spent in formal instruction.

Appropriate decision processes, then, can increase personal valuing and expectations of success, thereby enhancing motivation for learning and overcoming problems. By "appropriate" processes, we mean those that enable a student to self-select from desirable and feasible options. Besides improving motivation, such processes also provide opportunities for strengthening a student's ability to make sound choices.

Students, of course, may differ greatly in their motivation and ability to make decisions (see Feature 5). That is why we believe learning to make decisions should be a basic focus of instruction and why it is so important to be ready to help youngsters with decision making.

Feature 5: **Are Students with Learning Problems Competent to Make Good Decisions?**

Making a sound decision involves having the necessary information about alternatives and about positive and negative outcomes. It also involves having the competence to evaluate available information. Not surprisingly, when someone is perceived as not competent to decide, they often are not given the information or opportunity to prove the perception is incorrect.

Who is competent to decide? This is one of the more difficult and controversial questions confronting professionals, parents, and society in general.

Is it a matter of age? Education? Intelligence? If someone has a learning problem, are they less competent to make certain decisions than individuals without learning problems?

As yet, there are no satisfactory answers. There is, however, a rapidly growing body of research on the competence of youngsters with and without learning problems to participate in decision making (e.g., Baumrind, 1978; Melton, 1983; Weithorn, 1983).

Findings to date suggest that many youngsters and their parents believe that children as young as ten should participate in making decisions about everyday matters such as what clothes to buy and wear, what food to eat, what time to go to bed, and what friends to make. Parents and youngsters also generally agree that minors (thirteen and older) should participate in decisions regarding school programs and placements and physical and mental health treatment. Studies comparing youngsters' and adults' decisions as to treatment and research participation indicate that the decisions of children as young as nine are similar to those made by adults; and by the time they're fourteen, minors seem able to think as competently as adults in weighing certain decision risks and benefits.

In contrast to this research, studies of practitioners' views of minors' competence tend to be less optimistic about youngsters' competence to decide. Unfortunately, research on practitioners, views of minors' competence to participate in decision making is sparse. In a survey of mental health professionals, we found that slightly less than half of those who were willing to respond indicated they asked clients under eighteen to participate in the treatment decision. However, those who did ask, asked children as young as twelve. Moreover, this group of professionals judge that 72 percent of those they asked did turn out to have the necessary level of competence for making the decisions. Of particular relevance to the ideas presented here, the reason most cited for why they asked children to participate in such decision making was to enhance the motivation for treatment (Taylor, et al., 1985).

Despite the inadequacy of the available literature, findings to date support the importance of avoiding presumptions about students' lack of competence. Furthermore, classroom programs ought to be designed to facilitate and not delay development of increased levels of decision making competence. And, finally, we suggest that motivation often can be enhanced by encouraging students' participation in making decisions.

None of what has been said here is meant to imply that students will always make good decisions; nor will they always stick to a decision nor should they. All we are proposing is that students (with and without learning problems) should be offered a wide range of learning options and should be helped to sample the options so that they have reasonable information upon which to base decisions. Moreover, after they have experienced an activity for a brief while, they may well decide that they made a mistake, and so all such decisions should be renegotiable. As we understand motivation and learning, such options and renegotiations are major factors in determining whether students want to follow through on decisions and whether they become good at making decisions.

Steps in Helping Students Make Decisions

In helping with student decision making, it is useful to view the process as a series of steps.

First, a student must understand the value of making her or his own decisions. Minimally, this means the student's knowing that the process provides opportunities for taking greater control over one's life and overcoming one's problems.

> "We want to work with you in ways you think are good. Therefore, we've put together as many helpful and exciting learning opportunities as we could. While we think there are many good choices, we know that you are the best judge of what you like. So the first thing you might want to do is to look over and sample some of these options and see if any appeal to you. You may also want to suggest some other topics and activities. We only want to work with those that you choose as worth doing. We want you to have more control over your activities and program schedule than may have been the case in the past. Would you like to take some time and see what's available?"

Second, the process must include ways for students to actively sample and select from available options and to propose others whenever feasible.

> "You can spend some time looking over the various options, including watching other students who have chosen them. As you do this, I will be glad to answer any questions you may have. We can also talk about other things you would like to do and learn about that may not be here yet. Let's try to find a topic that personally interests you. The important thing is that you get a chance to decide which things you want to spend your time at school learning about."

Third, working out program details should be done as soon as choices are made. This is necessary so that the student is clear about the implications of following through on decisions. With such information, a student can either back off from a choice because it involves too much work or can publicly commit to follow through.

> "Let's talk about your decision to learn how to use a computer. That group meets each day, over ten weeks, for an hour a day. Before you get to do graphics, you will have to spend the first week learning basic computer operation. There is some reading material available; if you need help, several advanced students will be ready to explain the basics to you. If that sounds O.K. to you, write it on your posted schedule, and you can begin tomorrow."

Fourth, from the moment the student begins an activity, it is important to monitor motivation. If interest drops, the activity should be altered to better match the student; and if it can't be modified, the student should have the option of changing activities.

Teacher frustration is a frequent problem in helping students to make decisions and to improve their ability to do so. Many of a student's initial decisions don't hold up well. For a variety of reasons, a student may quickly lose interest in a topic or activity. This may happen, for example, if a youngster has a disability or does not work hard enough. However, early in the efforts to help youngsters make effective decisions, such "blaming" conclusions about why a particular choice didn't work can be premature and harmful. In general, when early decisions must be altered, it is important both to avoid blaming the student and to help students avoid blaming themselves.

On the other hand, if the student manifests the common tendency to externalize blame (i.e., the activity is described as too hard or too boring), it may be useful at first simply to accept the reasons at face value. By working on changes that reflect the individual's stated "alibis," in time, it will become evident whether the student is merely making excuses.

Again, the point is that the ability to make good decisions is learned (see Baron & Brown, 1991). Making decisions and evaluating their outcomes can be a good process for developing this basic skill. However, if the process is contaminated by accusations and blame, motivation for decision making can be undermined. As with all areas of learning, interactions over time will clarify whether students who continue to make poor decisions do so because of developmental or motivational problems.

Dialogues with Students

As suggested already, decision processes that lead to positive student perceptions involve ongoing dialogue between student and teacher. One result is a series of mutual agreements about what is to be done and how to proceed.

The mechanism for carrying on the dialogue often is called a *conference*, and the agreement often is referred to as a contract. However, terms like *conference* and *contract* do not convey the full sense of what is involved and at times have been interpreted in ways that are contrary to the meaning used here.

From a motivational perspective:

- Decisions must not be made for the student.
- Decisions must be modifiable whenever necessary.
- Dialogues should be designed to give, share, and clarify information seen as potentially useful to a student who is making a decision.
- Dialogues should involve not only conversational exchanges but also actual exploration and sampling of options.

The importance of the dialogue as a two way process cannot be overemphasized. A conference should be a time for persons to say what they need, want, and are hoping for from each other. When problems exist, time should be devoted to problem solving. One conference often is insufficient for arriving at a major decision. Therefore, the dialogue is an ongoing formal and informal process.

Summing up

Although the stress here has been on student decisions, good agreements are not one-sided. In general, the processes are meant to establish, maintain, and enhance a positive commitment on the part of both the student and the teacher toward working in a collaborative relationship. Such a relationship is seen as fundamental to the correction of learning problems.

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II. Fact Sheets/Practice Notes

A. Talking with Kids

B. Opening the Classroom Door

C. Using Volunteers

D. Creating Caring Classrooms & Schools

TALKING WITH KIDS

To help another, it is of great value and in many instances essential to know what the other is thinking and feeling. The most direct way to find this out is for the person to tell you. But, individuals probably won't tell you such things unless they think you will listen carefully. And the way to convince them of this is to listen carefully.

Of course, you won't always hear what you would like.

> Helper: *Well, Jose, how do you like school?*
> Jose: *Closed!*

In general, effective communication requires the ability to carry on a *productive dialogue*, that is, to talk with, not at, others. This begins with the ability to be an active (good) listener and to avoid prying and being judgmental. It also involves knowing when to share information and relate one's own experiences as appropriate and needed. The following are suggestions for engaging youngsters in productive dialogues.

I. Creating the Context for Dialogues

- Create a private space and a climate where the youngster can feel it is safe to talk.
- Clarify the value of keeping things confidential.
- Pursue dialogues when the time, location, and conditions are right.
- Utilize not just conferences and conversations, but interchanges when working together (e.g. exploring and sampling options for learning).

II. Establishing Credibility (as someone to whom it is worth talking)

- Respond with *empathy, warmth, and nurturance* (e.g., the ability to understand and appreciate what others are thinking and feeling, transmit a sense of liking, express appropriate reassurance and praise, minimize criticism and confrontation).
- Show *genuine regard and respect* (e.g., the ability to transmit real interest, acceptance, and validation of the other's feelings and to interact in a way that enables others to maintain a feeling of integrity and personal control.
- Use active and undistracted listening.
- Keep in mind that you want the student to *feel* more competent, self-determining, and related to you (and others) as a result of the interchange.

III. Facilitating Talk

- Avoid interruptions.
- Start slowly, avoid asking questions, and minimize pressure to talk (the emphasis should be more on conversation and less on questioning).
- Encourage the youngster to take the lead.
- Humor can open a dialogue; sarcasm usually has the opposite effect.
- Listen with interest.
- Convey the sense that you are providing an opportunity by extending an invitation to talk and avoiding the impression of another demanding situation (meeting them "where they are at" in terms of motivation and capability is critical in helping them develop positive attitudes and skills for oral communication).
- Build on a base of natural, informal inter-changes throughout the day.
- When questions are asked, the emphasis should be on open-ended rather than Yes/No questions.
- Appropriate self-disclosure by another can disinhibit a reluctant youngster.
- Pairing a reluctant youngster with a supportive peer or small group can help.
- Train and use others (aides, volunteers, peers) to (1) enter into productive (nonconfidential) dialogues that help clarify the youngster's perceptions and then (2) share the information with you in the best interests of helping.
- For youngsters who can't seem to convey their thoughts and feelings in words, their behavior often says a lot about their views; based on your observations and with the idea of opening a dialogue, you can share your perceptions and ask if you are right.
- Sometimes a list of items (e.g. things that they like/don't like to do at school/after school) can help elicit views and open up a dialogue.
- When youngsters have learning, behavior, and emotional problems, find as many ways as feasible to have positive interchanges with them and make positive contacts outweigh the negatives.
- ***Remember***: Short periods of silence are part of the process and should be accommodated.

The center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor and operates under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project, Dept. of Psychology, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563 Phone: (310) 825-3634. Support comes in part from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Office of Adolescent Health, with co-funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Mental Health Services.

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OPENING THE CLASSROOM DOOR TO ENHANCE LEARNING

Opening the classroom door is essential for enhancing the learning of teachers and other staff and increasing the productivity of classroom instruction.

The crux of the matter is to ensure use of effective mentoring and collegial practices to enhance learning through modeling and guiding change in a teacher's own classroom or in colleagues' rooms. This includes demonstrating and discussing new approaches, guiding initial practice and eventual implementation, and following-up to improve and refine.

Schools also can use specialist personnel (e.g., school psychologists, counselors, resource teachers) to mentor and demonstrate rather than pursuing traditional consultant roles. That is, instead of *telling* teachers about how to address student learning, behavior, and emotional problems, specialists can be trained to go into classrooms to model and guide teachers in implementing new practices to engage and re-engage students in learning.

Opening the classroom door also allows for adding a variety of assistance and useful partnerships. Student learning is neither limited to what is formally taught nor to time spent in classrooms. It occurs whenever and wherever the learner interacts with the surrounding environment. All facets of the community provide opportunities; anyone in the community who wants to facilitate learning might be a contributing teacher.

When a classroom successfully joins with its surrounding community, everyone has the opportunity to learn and to teach. Indeed, most schools do their job better when they are an integral and positive part of the community. The array of people who might be of assistance are:

- Aides and a variety of volunteers
- Other regular classroom teachers
- Family members
- Students
- Specialist teachers and support service personnel
- School administrators
- Classified staff
- Professionals-in-training

It is evident that teachers need to work closely with other teachers and school personnel, as well as with parents, professionals-in- training, volunteers, and so forth. Collaboration and teaming are key facets of mobilizing and enabling learning. These practices allow teachers to broaden the resources and strategies available in and out of the classroom to enhance learning and performance.

Examples of Opening the Door

Using Aides/Volunteers in Targeted Ways – Chronically, teachers find classroom instruction disrupted by some student who is less interested in the lesson than in interacting with a classmate. The first tendency usually is to use some simple form of social control to stop the disruptive behavior (e.g., using proximity and/or a mild verbal intervention). Because so many students today are not easily intimidated, teachers find such strategies do not solve the problem. So, the next steps escalate the event into a form of Greek tragedy. The teacher reprimands, warns, and finally sends the student to "time-out" or to the front office for discipline. And, the lesson usually is disrupted.

In contrast to this scenario, teachers can train an aide (if they have one) or a volunteer who has the ability to interact with students to focus on these youngsters. Specifically, the aide or volunteer should be taught to go and sit next to any youngster when a problem starts to emerge. The focus is on re-engaging the student in the lesson. If this proves undoable, the next step involves taking the student for a walk.

It is true that this means the student won't get the benefit of instruction during that period, but s/he wouldn't anyway. And, not having to shift into a discipline mode has multiple benefits. For one, the teacher is able to carry out the day's lesson. For another, the other students do not have the experience of seeing the teacher having a control contest with a student. (Even if a teacher wins such contests, it may have a negative effect on how students perceive the teacher; and if the teacher somehow "loses it," that definitely conveys a wrong message. Either outcome can be counterproductive with respect to a caring climate and a sense of community.) Finally, there has not been a negative encounter with the student. Such encounters build up negative attitudes on both sides which can be counterproductive to future teaching, learning, and behavior. Because there has been no negative encounter, the teacher can reach out to the student after the lesson is over and start to think about how to use an aide or volunteers to work with the student to prevent future problems.

Team Teaching – The obvious point here is that partnering with a compatible colleague enables team members to complement each others' areas of competence, provide each other with nurturance and personal support, and allow for relief in addressing problems.

Collaborating with Special Educators and other Specialists – Almost every school has personnel who have special training relevant to redesigning the classroom to work for a wider range of students. These specialists range from those who teach music or art to those who work with students designated as in need of special education. They can bring to the classroom not only their special expertise, but ideas for how the classroom design can incorporate practices that will engage students who have not been doing well and can accommodate those with special needs.

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USING VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers can be especially helpful working under the direction of the classroom teacher to establish a supportive relationship with students who are having trouble adjusting to school.

Volunteers may help students on a one to one basis or in small groups. Group interactions are especially important in enhancing a student's cooperative interactions with peers. One to one work is often needed to develop a positive relationship with a particularly aggressive or withdrawn student and in fostering successful task completion with a student easily distracted by peers.

Volunteers can help enhance a student's motivation and skills and, at the very least, help counter negative effects that arise when a student has difficulty adjusting to school.

The majority of people who seek out the opportunity to volunteer at school are ready, willing, and able to get into the classroom and interact well with students. These individuals are *naturals*.

All they need is a clear orientation about what is expected, as well as ongoing supervision designed to help them learn to be increasingly effective in working collaboratively with teachers and dealing with problems.

There are some volunteers who are not naturals. Many of these individuals can learn rapidly and be extremely helpful withjust a bit of investment of time and effort. The following are some guidelines that may help to avoid losing or prematurely giving up on a potentially valuable volunteer resource.

1. ***Take some time to appreciate what a volunteer can do.*** In some cases, it takes a while to see the positive qualities a volunteer can bring to the classroom. Try to work with a volunteer for a few weeks before deciding what (s)he is or isn't able to do. (Obviously, if a volunteer is completely inept, there is little point in keeping him or her on, and steps should be taken to kindly redirect their good intentions.)

   (Note: Despite the best of intentions on everyone's part, some volunteers do not work well with students. If a volunteer continues to demonstrate an inability to do so, [s]he may be willing to help with other tasks such as preparing and organizing materials.)

2. ***Watch for the need to re-clarify points made during the initial orientation.*** Volunteers have a lot they are trying to learn and remember when they first start. If they are not following-through on points made during the initial orientation, it may be that they didn't, assimilate the information.

3. ***Initially, some volunteers will need to spend more time observing than working with students.*** It usually does not take long before most of them will be comfortable with the students and class routines.

4. ***Initially, some volunteers (like some students) need a little more support and direction.*** At first, they may need to be told specifically what to do during the class. After they have a little experience and with a little encouragement, they can be expected to show greater initiative.

5. ***All volunteers need to know the teacher's plan for helping a particular student and to feel they can play a positive role in carrying out that plan. It is important for them to feel they are part of the teaching team.*** Volunteers who do not understand a teacher's plans tend to get confused and upset, particularly when the teacher must deal with the misbehavior of a student the volunteer is helping. Clarifying the plan and even including a volunteer in planning helps them to feel they are working collaboratively with the teacher.

6. ***Volunteers need a maximum of positive feedback and a minimum of evaluative criticism.*** Although they may not be clear about what specifically they are doing wrong, most volunteers are aware that they are not well-trained to work with students. Thus, they tend to interpret the lack of positive feedback from the teacher as an indication that they are not doing very well and often interpret relatively mild negative feedback as severe criticism. Volunteers respond well to daily appreciations; in place of critiques, what seems to work best are comments from the teacher that recognize how hard it is for even trained professionals to deal with some problems -along with suggestions about what to try next.

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CREATING A CARING CONTEXT FOR LEARNING AND HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

Learning is neither limited to what is formally taught nor to time spent in classrooms. It occurs whenever and wherever the learner interacts with the surrounding environment. All facets of the community (including the school) provide learning opportunities – thus the term ***learning community.***

Whenever a surrounding environment tries to facilitate learning, the process can be called teaching. Teaching occurs at school, at home, and in the community at large. It may be formalized or informally transmitted. Teaching happens most positively when the learner wants to learn something and the surrounding environment wants to help the learner do so. That is, positive learning is facilitated when the learner cares about learning and the teacher cares about teaching. The whole process undoubtedly benefits greatly when all the participants care about each other.

From a psychological perspective, it is important that teachers establish a classroom atmosphere that encourages mutual support and caring and that creates a sense of community. Such an atmosphere can play a key role in preventing learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems. Learning and teaching are experienced most positively when the learner cares about learning and the teacher cares about teaching.

Stated simply, the whole process benefits greatly when all the participants care about each other.

Caring has moral, social, and personal facets. And when all facets of caring are present and balanced, they can nurture individuals and facilitate the process of learning. At the same time, caring in all its dimensions should be a major focus of what is taught and learned. That is, the classroom curriculum should encompass a focus on fostering socio-emotional and physical development.

Caring begins when students (and their families) first arrive at a school. Classrooms and schools can do their job better if students feel they are truly welcome and have a range of social supports. A key facet of welcoming encompasses effectively connecting new students with peers and adults who can provide social support and advocacy.

On an ongoing basis, caring is best maintained through use of personalized instruction, regular student conferences, activity fostering social-emotional development, and opportunities for students to attain positive status. Efforts to create a caring classroom climate benefit from programs for cooperative learning, peer tutoring, mentoring, advocacy, peer counseling and mediation, human relations, and conflict resolution. Clearly, a myriad of strategies can contribute to students feeling positively connected to the classroom and school.

In the learning community, all are learners, and all may play some role as teachers. A teachers can be anyone who wants to facilitate learning – professional teachers, aides, volunteers, parents, siblings, peers, mentors in the community, librarians, recreation staff, etc. All constitute what can be called the ***teaching community.***

Given the importance of home involvement, attention also must be paid to creating a caring atmosphere for family members. Increased home involvement is more likely if families feel welcome and have access to social support at school. Thus, teachers and other school staff need to establish a program that effectively welcomes and connects families with school staff and other families to generate ongoing social support and greater participation in home involvement efforts.

Also, just as with students and their families, school staff need to feel truly welcome and socially supported. Rather than leaving this to chance, a caring school develops and institutionalizes a program to welcome and connect new staff with those with whom they will be working. And it does so in ways that effectively incorporates newcomers into the organization.

As Andy Hargreaves stresses, the way to relieve "the uncertainty and open-endedness in teaching" is to create "communities of colleagues who work collaboratively [in cultures of shared learning and positive risk-taking] to set their own professional standards and limits, while still remaining committed to continuous improvement. Such communities can also bring together the professional and personal lives of teachers in a way that supports growth and allows problems to be discussed without fear of disapproval or punishment."

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III. Tools/Handouts

Using a "Prereferral Intervention Process"
to Re-engage Students in Learning

As soon as a student looks like they are disengaging from learning at school, it is essential that teachers and support staff begin to try "something different." A useful set of strategies are those that have been developed as "prereferral interventions." Optimally, such strategies can re-engage the student; minimally, they add additional assessment information about what has gone wrong. As every teacher knows, the causes of student problems are hard to analyze. What looks like a learning or an attentional problem may be emotionally-based. Misbehavior often arises in reaction to learning difficulties. What appears as a school problem may be the result of problems at home.

A prereferral intervention process delineates steps and strategies to guide teachers. The following is one example. As has been stressed, the first steps in re-engaging a student involve getting the youngster's view of what's wrong (including, as feasible, exploring the problem with the family).

Some Steps in Prereferral Intervention

(1) Understanding the Problem

The following are some things to consider in seeking more information about what may be causing a youngster's problems. (See accompanying examples of interview instruments.)

(a) Through enhanced personal contacts, build a positive working relationship with the youngster and family.

(b) Focus first on assets (e.g. positive attributes, outside interests, hobbies, what the youngster likes at school and in class).

(c) Ask about what the youngster doesn't like at school.

(d) Explore the reasons for "dislikes" (e.g., Are assignments seen as too hard? as uninteresting? Is the youngster embarrassed because others will think s/he does not have the ability to do assignments? Is the youngster picked on? rejected? alienated?)

(e) Explore other possible causal factors.

(f) Explore what the youngster and those in the home think can be done to make things better (including extra support from a volunteer, a peer, friend, etc.).

(g) Discuss some new things the youngster and those in the home would be *willing* to try to make the situation better.

(2) ***Try new strategies in the classroom*** – based on the best information about what is causing the problem.

(3) If the new strategies don't work, ***talk to others*** at school to learn about approaches they find helpful (e.g., reach out for support/ mentoring/coaching, participate with others in clusters and teams, observe how others teach in ways that effectively address differences in motivation and capability, request additional staff development on working with such youngsters).

Prereferral Interventions Some Things to Try

- Make changes to (a) improve the match between a youngster's program and his/her interests and capabilities and (b) try to find ways for her/him to have a special, positive status in class, at the school, and in the community. Talk and work with other staff in developing ideas along these lines.
- Add resources for extra support (aide, volunteers, peer tutors) to help the youngster's efforts to learn and perform. Create time to interact and relate with the youngster as an individual.
- Discuss with the youngster (and those in the home) why the problems are occurring.
- Specifically focus on exploring matters with the youngster that will suggest ways to enhance positive motivation.
- Change aspects of the program (e.g.,materials, environment) to provide a better match with his/her interests and skills.
- Provide enrichment options (in and out of class).
- Use resources such as volunteers, aides, and peers to enhance the youngster's social support network.
- Specifically focus on exploring ways those in the home can enhance their problem-solving efforts.
- If necessary include other staff (e.g., counselor, principal) in a special discussion with the youngster exploring reasons for the problem and ways to enhance positive involvement at school and in class.

(4) If necessary, use the ***school's referral processes*** to ask for additional support services.

(5) Work with referral resources to ***coordinate your efforts*** **with theirs** for classroom success.

Clarifying Student Perceptions of Disengagement

I'd like to get to know you a bit more before we talk about school.

(a) What are some of the things you like to do when your not at school (e.g., special interests, fun activities)?

(b) What, if anything, is there that you like to do at school?

Some students have "turned off" to school. That is, they don't really want to go to class or do what the teacher asks them to do. This happens for a lot of reasons. We think if we can better understand some of the reasons we might be able to make schools better places.

(1) About how many students at this school do you think are "turned off" to school?

1-10%____ 11-25%____ 26-50%____ 51-75%___ 76-90%____

(2) How about you? How often do you feel that way about school?

never____ sometimes_____ pretty often_____ all the time____

(3) When you feel that way, what is the school or your teacher(s) doing that you don't like?

(After the student responds, you may want to do a bit more probing: (e.g., Are assignments seen as too hard? as uninteresting? Is the youngster embarrassed because others will think s/he does not have the ability to do assignments? Is the youngster picked on? rejected? alienated?)

(4) What would you like the school and your teacher(s) to do differently?

(5) What would need to change to make going to school worth your time and effort?

Clarifying Parent Perceptions of their Child's Disengagement

(1) What are some of the things your child likes to do when not at school (e.g., special interests, fun activities)?

(2) What, if anything, is there that s/he like to do at school?

We realize that some students "turn off" to school. That is, they don't really want to go to class or do what the teacher asks them to do. This happens for a lot of reasons.

(3) Do you feel that your youngster has "turned off" to school?

no____ sometimes_____ pretty often_____ all the time____

(4) When s/he feels that way, what is the school or the teacher(s) doing that s/he doesn't like?

(After the parents respond, you may want to do a bit more probing: (e.g., Are assignments seen as too hard? as uninteresting? Is the youngster embarrassed because others will think s/he does not have the ability to do assignments? Is the youngster picked on? rejected? alienated?)

(5) What would you like the school and teacher(s) to do differently to re-engage your youngster in learning at school?

Guiding the Re-negotiation Process

Thank you for sharing your views and ideas with us. What you have told us about what you would like the school to do differently and what you would like changed to make going to school worth your time and effort is very important.

We would really like to make school a better place for you and other students who have been "turned off."

We think maybe a good place to start is by working together on a plan for how to proceed.

Let's begin by looking at some of the changes and new opportunities that the school wants to offer you.

Then, let's try to identify some of the things you would really see as good ways for you to spend time at school and in class.

(After the assisting the student in sampling new processes and content –)

(1) Now, let's talk about some of things you would like to learn about.

(2) What would be the best ways for us to help you to learn these things?

(3) Let's make some plans for how to start all this. We can redo these plans whenever you feel they need to be changed.

For a while, let's plan to meet at the end of each day to talk about whether you feel the plans need to be changed.

IV. Additional Resources

Quick Finds

Student Motivation

Environments that Support Learning

Classroom Focusing Enabling

Training Tutorial: Classroom changes

IV. Additional Resources

This Center Response is from our website at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu To access the online version, visit our website, click "Search & Quick Find" on the left and then scroll down in the list of "Center Responses" to *Student Motivation*

A Center Response:

The following reflects our most recent response for technical assistance related to STUDENT MOTIVATION. This list represents a sample of information to get you started and is not meant to be an exhaustive list.

(Note: Clicking on the following links causes a new window to be opened. To return to this window, close the newly opened one)

If you go online and access the Quick Find, you can simply click over to the various sites to access documents, agencies, etc. For your convenience here, the website addresses for various Quick Find entries are listed in a table at the end of this document in order of appearance, cross-referenced by the name of the resource.

Center Developed Resources and Tools

- Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom Focused Enabling
- Learning Problems and Learning Disabilities
- Behavior Problems: What's a School to Do?
- Enabling Learning in the Classroom: A Primary Mental Health Concern

Relevant Publications on the Internet

- Curriculum Tips for Enhancing Motivation
- Developing Instinsic Motivation
- ERIC Digest: Student Motivation to Learn
- ERIC Digest: School Leadership and Student Motivation
- ERIC Digest: Motivation and Middle School Students
- ERIC Digest: Motivation in Instructional Design
- Hard Work and High Expectations: Motivating Students to Learn
- How Can Teachers Develop Students' Motivation -- and Success?
- Improving Student Motivation in the Secondary Classroom through the Use of Critical Thinking Skills, Cooperative Learning Techniques, and Reflective Journal Writing
- Improving the Motivation of Middle School Students through the Use of Curricular and Instructional Adaptations
- Instructional Models, Strategies, Methods, and Skills
- Intrinsic Motivation
- Intrinsic Motivation and Instruction
- Motivating Students to Achieve (listed in right side menu)
- Motivating Students to Learn: General Strategies Motivating Students
- Motivating Students to Learn: Some Tips to Try
- Motivation for Learning: Parents Can Help
- Motivating Students
- Some Ideas for Motivating Students
- Specific Classroom Management Methods
- Understanding the Keys to Motivation to Learn
- When Students Do Not Feel Motivated for Literacy Learning: How a Responsive Classroom Culture Helps

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- Student Motivation, School Culture, and Academic Achievement: What School Leaders Can Do (Note: This is a pdf document)

Selected Materials from Our Clearinghouse

- Learning Problems & Learning Disabilities: Moving Forward
- School Avoidance Behavior: Motivational Bases and Implications for Intervention

Relevant Publications That Can Be Obtained at Your Local Library

- "The concept of intrinsic motivation: Implications for practice and research with the learning disabled." *Learning Disability Quarterly, 1,* 43-54. By H.S. Adelman (1978).
- "Enhancing motivation for overcoming learning and behavior problems." *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 16,* 384-392. By H.S. Adelman and L. Taylor (1983b).
- *Healthy Classroom Management: Motivation, Communication, and Discipline*. By R. Nakamura (1999). Wadsworth Pub. Co.
- *Helping Students Develop Self-Motivation*. By D.R. Grossnickle (1989). National Association of Secondary School Principals.
- "Intrinsic motivation and school misbehavior: Some intervention implications." *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 23,* 541-550. By H.S. Adelman and L. Taylor (1990).
- *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior (Perspectives in Social Psycholoy*. E.L. Deci (1985). Plenum Pub. Corp.
- *The Learner-Centered Classroom and School: Strategies for Increasing Student Motivation and Achievement*. By B.L. McCombs et al. (eds). (1997). Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- "Motivation and Effective Teaching." *Educational Values and Cognitive Instruction: Implications for Reform.* By R. Ames & C. Ames (1991). Hillsdale: L. Erlbaum and Associates, p. 247-272.
- *Motivation to Learn: From Theory to Practice*. By D. Stipek (1997). Allyn & Bacon.
- *On Understanding Intervention in Psychology and Education*. By H.S. Adelman & L. Taylor (1994). Praeger Pub Text.
- *Punished By Rewards: The Trouble with Gold Stars, Incentive Plans, A's, Praise, and Other Bribes*. By A. Kohn (1999). Allyn & Bacon.
- *Student Motivation: Cultivating a Love of Learning*. By L.S. Lumsden (1999). Eric Clearinghouse on Educational Management.
- *When Students Choose Content: A Guide to Increasing Motivation, Autonomy, and Achievement*. By J. Passe (1996). Corwin Pr.
- *Why We Do What We Do: Understanding Self-Motivation*. By E. Deci & R. Flaste (1996). Penguin USA.

Related Agencies and Websites

- Focal Points: Tips for Teachers
- Motivation
- National Research Center on Student Learning
- Professional Development in Education: Student Motivation
- TrackStar: Motivation in the Classroom
- WAVE for Teens

We hope these resources met your needs. If not, feel free to contact us for further assistance.For additional resources related to this topic, use our search page to find people, organizations, websites and documents. You may also go to our technical assistance page for more specific technical assistance requests.

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Shortcut Text	Internet Address
Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom Focused Enabling	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/guidepak.htm#encomp
Learning Problems and Learning Disabilities	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/intropak.htm#lpld
Behavior Problems: What's a School to Do?	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/behprob.htm
Enabling Learning in the Classroom: A Primary Mental Health Concern	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/enabling.htm
Curriculum Tips for Enhancing Motivation	http://www.crcssd1.calgary.ab.ca/tech/otn/learn/motivation.html
Developing Instinsic Motivation	http://www.cssd.ab.ca/tech/otn/learn/motivation.html
ERIC Digest: Student Motivation to Learn	http://ericae.net/edo/ED370200.HTM
ERIC Digest: School Leadership and Student Motivation	http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed346558.html
ERIC Digest: Motivation and Middle School Students	http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed421281.html
ERIC Digest: Motivation in Instructional Design	http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed409895.html
Hard Work and High Expectations: Motivating Students to Learn	http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content3/work.expectations.k12.4.html
How Can Teachers Develop Students' Motivation -- and Success?	http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr197.shtml
Improving Student Motivation in the Secondary Classroom through the Use of Critical Thinking Skills, Cooperative Learning Techniques, and Reflective Journal Writing	http://ericae.net/ericdb/ED411334.htm
Improving the Motivation of Middle School Students through the Use of Curricular and Instructional Adaptations	http://ericae.net/ericdb/ED412010.htm
Instructional Models, Strategies, Methods, and Skills	http://www.sask.ed.gov.sk.ca/docs/policy/approach/instrapp03.html
Intrinsic Motivation	http://teachers.net/gazette/AUG00/tracy.html
Intrinsic Motivation and Instruction	http://www.stanford.edu/~percival/LepperMalone.html
Motivating Students to Achieve (listed in right side menu)	http://www.publiceducation.org/resources/chase2.htm
Motivating Students to Learn: General Strategies Motivating Students	http://www.bus.indiana.edu/isweb/teachln/motivate.htm
Motivating Students to Learn: Some Tips to Try	http://www.queensu.ca/idc/trainers/hand/motivate.html
Motivation for Learning: Parents Can Help	http://www.nea.org/helpfrom/connecting/tools/motivate.html
Motivating Students	http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~tep/tshooting/motivating.html
Some Ideas for Motivating Students	http://www.sccu.edu/Faculty/R_Harris/motivate.htm
Specific Classroom Management Methods	http://seamonkey.ed.asu.edu/~jimbo/RIBARY_Folder/specific.htm

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Shortcut Text	Internet Address
Understanding the Keys to Motivation to Learn	http://www.mcrel.org/products/noteworthy/noteworthy/barbaram.asp
When Students Do Not Feel Motivated for Literacy Learning: How a Responsive Classroom Culture Helps	http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/clic/nrrc/rspon_r8.html
Student Motivation, School Culture, and Academic Achievement: What School Leaders Can Do	http://eric.uoregon.edu/pdf/trends/motivation.pdf
Learning Problems & Learning Disabilities: Moving Forward	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=3013DOC17
School Avoidance Behavior: Motivational Bases and Implications for Intervention	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=3004DOC15
Motivation	http://www.manta.ieee.org/P1484/lcorp/pilots/motivati.htm
National Research Center on Student Learning	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=02614
Professional Development in Education: Student Motivation	http://ipddev.np.edu.sg/wii/motivation/
TrackStar: Motivation in the Classroom	http://scrtec.org/track/tracks/t00397.html
WAVE for Teens	http://www.waveinc.org/
search	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/search.htm
technical assistance page	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/techreq.htm
Center for School Mental Health Assistance	http://csmha.umaryland.edu/
"The fine Art of Fishing"	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/selfhelp.htm

This Center Response is from our website at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu To access the online version, visit our website, click "Search & Quick Find" on the left and then scroll down in the list of "Center Responses" to *Environments that Support Learning*

A Center Response:

The following reflects our most recent response for technical assistance related to ENVIRONMENTS THAT SUPPORT LEARNING. This list represents a sample of information to get you started and is not meant to be an exhaustive list.

(Note: Clicking on the following links causes a new window to be opened. To return to this window, close the newly opened one)

If you go online and access the Quick Find, you can simply click over to the various sites to access documents, agencies, etc. For your convenience here, the website addresses for various Quick Find entries are listed in a table at the end of this document in order of appearance, cross-referenced by the name of the resource.

Center Developed Resources and Tools

- Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling
- An Introductory Packet on Assessing to Address Barriers to Learning
- A Resource Aid Packet on Addressing Barriers to Learning: A Set of Surveys to Map What a School Has and What It Needs
- A Technical Aid Packet on Welcoming and Involving New Students and Families
- What Schools Can Do to Welcome and Meet the Needs of All Students and Families
- A Technical Aid Packet on Volunteers to Help Teachers and Schools Address Barriers to Learning

Relevant Publications on the Internet

- Building a Sense of Community in Middle Schools
- Classroom Management - Managing Physical Space (Temple University)
- Creating an Effective Physical Classroom Environment
- Impact of Facilities on Learning (National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities)
- The Learning Partnerships Specialist: Building the New and Needed Web of Learning Support
- Schools For the Future (National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities)
- Some Simple and Yet Overlooked Common Sense Tips For A More Effective Classroom Environment
- Tips for Teachers Re: Learning Centers
- Problem-Based Learning
- Block Scheduling: The Key to Quality Learning Time
- Peer Buddies Can Promote Inclusion
- Student Diversity and Learning Needs
- Instructional Approaches: A Framework for Professional Practice

Selected Materials from our Clearinghouse

- Designing Supportive School Environments
- Least Restrictive Environment, Inclusion, and Students with Disabilities: A Legal Analysis
- Report of the Goal Seven Task Force on Defining a Disciplined Environment Conducive to Learning

Related Agencies and Websites

- National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities
- Instructional Learning Environment Questionnaire
- Coalition for Community Schools
- Urban Educational Facilities for the 21st Century (UEF 21)

Relevant Publications That Can Be Obtained at Your Local Library

- "Understanding environments: the key to improving social processes and program outcomes" by Moos RH (1996). In: *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 24(1): 193-201.
- *The Social Climate Scales: A user's guide* by Moos, R. (1994). Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.
- "The perceived environment of special education classrooms for adolescents: A revision of the Classroom Environment Scale" by Trickett, E. J., Leone, P. E., Fink, C. M., & Braaten, S. L. (1993). In: *Exceptional Children*, 59(5), 411-420.
- "Classroom environments and middle school students' views of science" by Fouts JT & Myers RE (1992). In: *Journal of Educational Research*, 85(6): 356-361.
- "The effects of students' perceptions of the learning environment on their motivation in language arts" by Knight SL (1991). In: *Journal of Classroom Interaction*, 26(2): 19-23.
- *Living an idea: Empowerment and the evolution of an inner city alternative public school* by Trickett, E. J. (1991). Cambridge, MA.: Brookline Books.
- "Two decades of classroom environment research" by Fraser B (1991). In: Fraser B & Walberg HJ, *Educational Environments: Evaluation, Antecedents, and Consequences*. (pp. 3-27). Oxford, England: Pergamon Press, Inc.
- "Validity and use of classroom environment instruments" by Fraser B (1991). In: *Journal of Classroom Interaction*, 26(2): 5-11.
- "Understanding the social ecology of classrooms for adolescents with behavioral disorders: A preliminary study of differences in perceived environments" by Leone PE, Luttig PG, Zlotlow S, & Trickett EJ (1990). In: *Behavioral Disorders*, 16(1): 55-65.
- "Learning environments in context: Links between school, work, and family settings" by Moos R (1987). In: Fraser B (Ed.), *The Study of Learning Environments* (Volume 2, p 1-16). Perth, Australia: Curtin University of Technology.
- "Person-environment congruence in work, school, and health care settings" by Moos, RH (1987). In: *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 31: 231-247.
- "Student perceptions of preferred classroom learning environment" by Byrne DB, Hattie JA, & Fraser BJ (1986). In: *Journal of Educational Research*, 80(1): 10-18.
- "Measuring the educational climate in the classroom: A comparative analysis of four investigations inspired by the Moos model" by DeKetele JM (1985). In: *International Review of Applied Psychology*, 34: 25-38.
- "Natural experiments and the educational context: The environment and effects of an alternative inner city public school on adolescents" by Trickett, E. J., McConahay, J. B., Phillips, D., & Ginter, M. A. (1985). In: *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 13, 617-643.
- "Context and coping: Toward a unifying conceptual framework" by Moos R (1984). In: *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 12: 5-25.
- "The independent school experience: Aspects of the normative environments of single-sex and coed secondary schools" by Trickett, E., Trickett, P., Castro, J., & Schaffner, P. (1982). In: *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 74, 374-381.
- "Predicting students' outcomes from their perceptions of classroom psychosocial environment" by Fraser B & Fisher D (1982). In: *American Educational Research Journal*, 19: 498-518.
- "Evaluating and changing class room settings" by Moos, R., & David, T. (1981). In J. Epstein (Ed.), *The quality of school life* (pp. 59-80). Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath.
- "Evaluating classroom learning environments" by Moos R (1980). In: *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 6: 239-252.
- *Evaluating educational environments: Procedures, methods, findings and policy implications* by Moos R (1979). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- "Three domains of classroom environment: An alternative analysis of the Classroom Environment Scale" by Trickett, E., & Quinlan, D. (1979). In: *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 7, 279-291.
- "Using individual or group scores on perceived environment scales: Classroom Environment Scale as example" by Trickett, E., & Wilkinson, L. (1979). In: *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 7, 497-502.
- "Classroom social climate and student absences and grades" by Moos, R., & Moos, B. (1978). In: *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 70, 263-269.
- "Towards a social-ecological conception of adolescent socialization: Normative data on contrasting types of public schools" by Trickett, E. (1978). In: *Child Development*, 49, 408-414.
- "A typology of junior high and high school classrooms" by Moos R (1978). In: *American Educational Research Journal*, 15: 53-66.
- "Classroom climate and class success: A case study at the university level" by DeYoung A (1977). In: *Journal of Educational Research*, 70: 252-257.
- "Meauring and changing classroom climate" by DeYoung A (1977). In: *New Directions in Teaching*, 6: 40-47.
- "The How and Why of Learning Centers" by McCarthy MM (1977). In: *Elementary School Journal*, 77: 292-299.
- "Personal correlates of contrastin environments: Student satisfaction in high school classrooms" by Trickett, E., & Moos, R. (1974). In: *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 2,1-12.
- "The social environments of junior high and high school classrooms" by Trickett, E., & Moos, R. (1973). In: *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 65, 93-102.

We hope these resources met your needs. If not, feel free to contact us for further assistance.For additional resources related to this topic, use our search page to find people, organizations, websites and documents. You may also go to our technical assistance page for more specific technical assistance requests.

If you haven't done so, you may want to contact our sister center, the Center for School Mental Health Assistance at the University of Maryland at Baltimore.

If our website has been helpful, we are pleased and encourage you to use our site or contact our Center in the future. At the same time, you can do your own technical assistance with "The fine Art of Fishing" which we have developed as an aid for do-it-yourself technical assistance.

This document contains the following shortcuts:

Shortcut Text	Internet Address
Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/guidepak.htm#encomp
An Introductory Packet on Assessing to Address Barriers to Learning	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/intropak.htm#assessing
A Resource Aid Packet on Addressing Barriers to Learning: A Set of Surveys to Map What a School Has and What It Needs	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/resource.htm#surveys
A Technical Aid Packet on Welcoming and Involving New Students and Families	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/techpak.htm#welcoming
What Schools Can Do to Welcome and Meet the Needs of All Students and Families	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/guidepak.htm#welcome
A Technical Aid Packet on Volunteers to Help Teachers and Schools Address Barriers to Learning	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=2015DOC9999

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Building a Sense of Community in Middle Schools	http://www.principals.org/news/bltn_prac_cond1001.html
Classroom Management - Managing Physical Space (Temple University)	http://www.temple.edu/CETP/temple_teach/cm-space.html
Creating an Effective Physical Classroom Environment	http://www.teachervision.com/tv/resources/tactics/environ_index.html
The Learning Partnerships Specialist: Building the New and Needed Web of Learning Support	http://www.findarticles.com/cf_0/m0HKV/1_9/65014439/print.jhtml
Schools For the Future (National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities)	http://www.edfacilities.org/ir/future.cfm
Some Simple and Yet Overlooked Common Sense Tips For A More Effective Classroom Environment	http://www.findarticles.com/cf_0/m0FCG/2_26/62980779/print.jhtml
Tips for Teachers Re: Learning Centers	http://vpsd6.vrml.k12.la.us:8000/~monah/Centers.htm
Problem-Based Learning	http://www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/pbl/info.html
Block Scheduling: The Key to Quality Learning Time	http://www.naesp.org/comm/p0101c.htm
Peer Buddies Can Promote Inclusion	http://www.loveland.k12.oh.us/Pupserv/JanFeb00.htm
Student Diversity and Learning Needs	http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed412527.html
Instructional Approaches: A Framework for Professional Practice	http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/policy/approach/index.html
Designing Supportive School Environments	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=2101DOC7
Least Restrictive Environment, Inclusion, and Students with Disabilities: A Legal Analysis	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=2311DOC13
Report of the Goal Seven Task Force on Defining a Disciplined Environment Conducive to Learning	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/smhp.exe?ACTION=POPUP&ITEM=2108DOC21
National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities	http://www.edfacilities.org/ir/
Instructional Learning Environment Questionnaire	http://ericae.net/tc3/TC020201.htm
Coalition for Community Schools	http://www.communityschools.org/
Urban Educational Facilities for the 21st Century (UEF 21)	http://www.designshare.com/UEF/UEF_3_99/UEF_3_99a.htm
search	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/search.htm
technical assistance page	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/techreq.htm
Center for School Mental Health Assistance	http://csmha.umaryland.edu/
"The fine Art of Fishing"	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/selfhelp.htm

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This Center Response is from our website at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu To access the online version, visit our website, click "Search & Quick Find" on the left and then scroll down in the list of "Center Responses" to *Classroom Focused Enabling*

A Center Response:

The following reflects our most recent response for technical assistance related to CLASSROOM FOCUSED ENABLING. This list represents a sample of information to get you started and is not meant to be an exhaustive list.

(Note: Clicking on the following links causes a new window to be opened. To return to this window, close the newly opened one).

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Center Developed Resources and Tools

- A Sampling of Outcome Findings from Interventions Relevant to Addressing Barriers to Learning
  - Appendix A: Classroom Focused Enabling - Small Classes/Small Schools
  - Appendix A: Classroom Focused Enabling - Prereferral Intervention Efforts
  - Appendix A: Classroom Focused Enabling - Tutoring
  - Appendix A: Classroom Focused Enabling - Alternative Schools
  - Appendix A: Classroom Focused Enabling - Health/Mental Health Education
- Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling
- Guides for the Enabling Component -- Addressing Barriers to Learning and Enhancing Healthy Development
- QuickFind on the Enabling Component: Addressing Barriers to Learning by Enabling Students to Succeed

Relevant Publications on the Internet

- "Co-Teaching" (2001) Council for Exceptional Children Current Practice Alerts.
- Paraprofessionals in Educational Settings, Data Trends

We hope these resources met your needs. If not, feel free to contact us for further assistance.For additional resources related to this topic, use our search page to find people, organizations, websites and documents. You may also go to our technical assistance page for more specific technical assistance requests.

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A Sampling of Outcome Findings from Interventions Relevant to Addressing Barriers to Learning	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/techpak.htm#technical
Small Classes/Small Schools	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Sampler/Outcome/appa1.pdf
Prereferral Intervention Efforts	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Sampler/Outcome/appa2.pdf
Tutoring	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Sampler/Outcome/appa3.pdf
Alternative Schools	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Sampler/Outcome/appa4.pdf
Health/Mental Health Education	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Sampler/Outcome/appa5.pdf
Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/guidepak.htm#encomp
Guides for the Enabling Component -- Addressing Barriers to Learning and Enhancing Healthy Development	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/guidepak.htm#guides
QuickFind on the Enabling Component: Addressing Barriers to Learning by Enabling Students to Succeed	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf_enabling.htm
"Co-Teaching" (2001) Council for Exceptional Children Current Practice Alerts.	http://www.dldcec.org/alerts/
Paraprofessionals in Educational Settings, Data Trends	http://www.rtc.pdx.edu/pgDataTrends.shtml
search	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/search.htm
technical assistance page	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/techreq.htm
Center for School Mental Health Assistance	http://csmha.umaryland.edu/
"The fine Art of Fishing"	http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/selfhelp.htm

TRAINING TUTORIAL

The Center's Training Tutorials are organized topically, with readings and related activities for "preheating," active learning, and follow-up. All readings and activity guides are available on the website of the national *Center for Mental Health in Schools* at UCLA.

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

CLASSROOM CHANGES TO ENHANCE & REENGAGE STUDENTS IN LEARNING

Overview Guide

	Page
Initial Resources to "Preheat" Exploration of this Matter	1
>*Enabling Learning in the Classroom* (newsletter article)	2
>*Opening the Classroom Door* (newsletter article)	6
>*Reengaging Students in Classroom Learning* (Tutorial flyer)	13

Learning Sessions

		Page
Topic 1:	***Getting out of the box: Rethinking what's possible in the classroom***	14
Reading.	From: *Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom Focused Enabling* (Module II, Unit A)	15
Activity.	Use the various attached materials as stimuli and tools to focus application of what has been read	
	(1) *Outline What Has Been Learned so Far* - Develop a brief outline of what seem to be the most important features of good teaching. (use the attached worksheet)	38
	(2) *Discussion Session Exploring the Outlined Features* – Form an informal discussion and/or a formal study group (see the attached guide sheet)	39
	(3) *Outline revision* – Make ongoing revisions in the outline (see the attached guide)	40
	(4) *Review the self-study survey entitled: Classroom-Focused Enabling*	41

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Topic 2:	***Engaging and Re-engaging Students in Classroom Learning: Understanding Student Motivation***	48
Reading.	From: *Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom Focused Enabling,* (Module II, Unit B)	49
Activity.	Use the various attached materials as stimuli and tools to focus application of what has been read	
	(1) *Write and discuss: Engaged and unengaged learning* (use the attached worksheet as guide)	72
	(2) *Classroom observation:* Engaged learning (see attached guide)	73

Topic 3:	***Engaging and Re-engaging Students in Classroom Learning: General Classroom Practices***	74
Reading.	From: *Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom Focused Enabling,* (Module II, Unit C)	75
Activity.	Use the various attached materials as stimuli and tools to focus application of what has been read	
	(1) *Lesson Plan* – Facilitating Motivation (see attached guide)	130

Follow-up for Ongoing Learning

(1) The ***Quick Finds*** section of the Center website offers topic areas that are regularly updated with new reports, publications, internet sites, and centers specializing in the topic. Stakeholders can keep current on *Creating an Enabling Component* by visiting topic areas such as:

>Classroom Focused Enabling
>Dropout Prevention
>Environments that support learning
>Mentoring
>Model Programs
>Motivation
>Peer relationships and peer counseling
>Prevention for students "at risk"
>Resilience and protective factors
>Social Promotion
>Technology as an intervention tool
>Tutoring
>Volunteers in Schools

(2) Consider forming ongoing study groups.

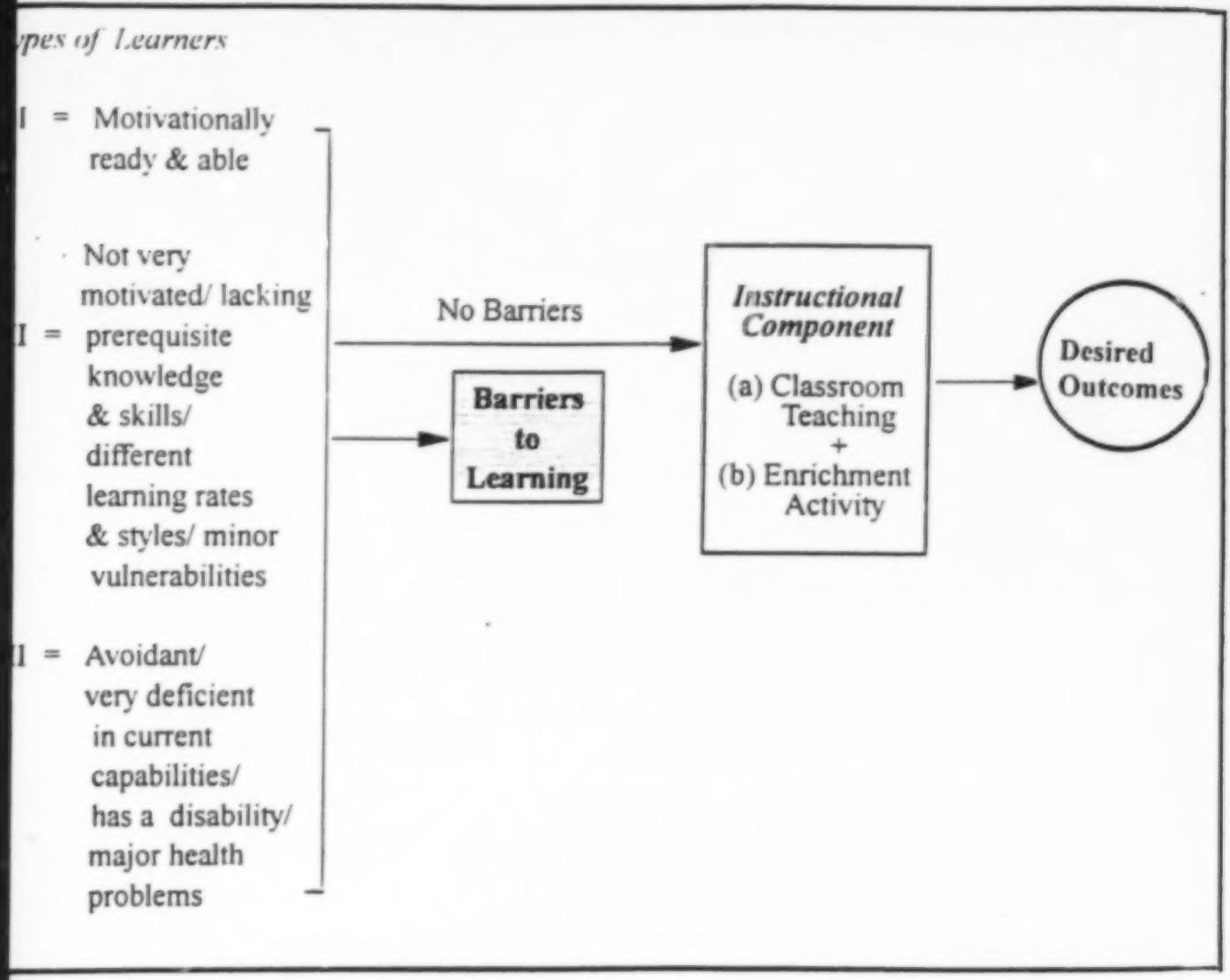
(3) Request ongoing inservice training on related matters.

Originals for Overheads

The following can be copied to overhead transparencies to assist in presenting this material.

A. Barriers to Learning
B. Learner Options to Enhance Motivation and Learning
C. Talking with Kids
E. Opening the Classroom Door to Assistance
F. Prereferral Intervention and Re-engaging Students

Barriers to Learning


ypes of Learners
I = Motivationally ready & able
Not very motivated/ lacking
I = prerequisite knowledge & skills/ different learning rates & styles/ minor vulnerabilities
I = Avoidant/ very deficient in current capabilities/ has a disability/ major health problems
No Barriers
Barriers to Learning
Instructional Component
(a) Classroom Teaching
+
(b) Enrichment Activity
Desired Outcomes

Examples of Barriers:

* Negative attitudes toward schooling
* Deficiencies in necessary prerequisite skills
* Disabilities
* School and community deficits
* Lack of home involvement
* Lack of peer support
* Peers who are negative influences
* Lack of recreational opportunities
* Lack of community involvement
* Inadequate school support services
* Inadequate social support services
* Inadequate health support services

Learner Options to Enhance Motivation and Learning

Learner Options include:

Content - Students should be able to explore content that has personal value.

- Expanding options to include a wide sampling of topics that are currently popular with the majority of students (e.g., animals, sports, music)
- Ask students to identify additional topics they would like included
- Options the teacher identifies as important and worthwhile.

Process - Students should be helped to pursue outcomes and levels of competence that reflect their continuing interest and effort.

- Process outcomes can be expanded by adding procedures that are widely popular (e.g., video or audiovisual materials)
- by adding those of special interest to specific students, or
- by adding those newly identified by the teacher.

Structure- It is expected that those with the lowest motivation are likely to need the most support and guidance. At the same time, they are likely not to seek help readily. Moreover, those with avoidance motivation tend to react negatively to structure they perceive as used to control them.

Talking with Kids

How to engage youngsters in productive dialogues

1. Create the context for dialogue

   Create a private space and a climate where the youngster can feel it is safe to talk

   Clarify the value of keeping things confidential

   Pursue dialogues when the time, location, and conditions are right.

2. Establish credibility as someone to whom it is worth talking

   Respond with empathy, warmth, and nurturance

   Show genuine regard and respect

   Use active and undistracted listening

3. Facilitate talk: be an active listener

   Avoid interruptions

   Start slowly, avoid asking questions, and minimize pressure to talk

   Encourage the youngster to take the lead

Remember: short periods of silence are part of the process and should be accommodated.

Opening the Classroom Door to Assistance and Partnerships

When a classroom successfully joins with its surrounding community, everyone has the opportunity to learn and to teach. Indeed, most schools do their job better when they are an integral and positive part of the community. The array of people who might be of assistance are:

- Aides and a variety of Volunteers
- Other regular classroom teachers
- Family members
- Students
- Specialist teachers and support service personnel
- School administrators
- Classified staff
- Professionals-in-training

Some examples of Opening the Door

- Using Aides/Volunteers in targeted ways
- Team Teaching
- Collaboration with Special Educators and other Specialists

Prereferral Intervention and Re-engaging Students in Learning

A Prereferral intervention process delineates steps and strategies to guide teachers seeking information about what may be causing a youngster's problems.

Some Steps in Prereferral Intervention are:

1. *Understanding the Problem*:
- Get the youngster's view of what's wrong.
- Build a positive working relationship with the youngster and family.
- Ask about what the youngster doesn't like at school
- Explore the reasons for dislikes
- Explore possible causal factors
- Explore what the youngster and those in the home think can be done to make things better.
- Discuss some new things the youngster and those in the home would be willing to try.

2. *Try new strategies in the classroom*
- Make changes to improve the match between the student's problem and his/her interests and capabilities

3. If the new strategies don't work, *talk to others* at the school

4. If necessary, use the *school's referral processes*
- If necessary include other staff in a special discussion with the youngster exploring reasons for the problem and ways to enhance positive involvement at school and in class.

5. Work with referral resources to *coordinate your efforts* with theirs

We hope you found this to be a useful resource.
There's more where this came from!

This packet has been specially prepared by our Clearinghouse. Other Introductory Packets and materials are available. Resources in the Clearinghouse are organized around the following categories.

Systemic Concerns

- Policy issues related to mental health in schools
- Mechanisms and procedures for program/service coordination
  - Collaborative Teams
  - School-community service linkages
  - Cross disciplinary training and interprofessional education
- Comprehensive, integrated programmatic approaches (as contrasted with fragmented, categorical specialist oriented services)
- Issues related to working in rural, urban, and suburban areas
- Restructuring school support service
  - Systemic change strategies
  - Involving stakeholders in decisions
  - Staffing patterns
  - Financing
  - Evaluation, Quality Assurance
  - Legal Issues
- Professional standards

Programs and Process Concerns

- Clustering activities into a cohesive, programmatic approach
  - Support for transitions
  - Mental health education to enhance healthy development & prevent problems
  - Parent/home involvement
  - Enhancing classrooms to reduce referrals (including prereferral interventions)
  - Use of volunteers/trainees
  - Outreach to community
  - Crisis response
  - Crisis and violence prevention (including safe schools)
- Staff capacity building & support
  - Cultural competence
  - Minimizing burnout
- Interventions for student and family assistance
  - Screening/Assessment
  - Enhancing triage & ref. processes
  - Least Intervention Needed
  - Short-term student counseling
  - Family counseling and support
  - Case monitoring/management
  - Confidentiality
  - Record keeping and reporting
  - School-based Clinics

Psychosocial Problems

- Drug/alcohol abuse
- Depression/suicide
- Grief
- Dropout prevention
- Gangs
- Pregnancy prevention/support
- Eating problems (anorexia, bulimia)
- Physical/Sexual Abuse
- Neglect
- Gender and sexuality
- Self-esteem
- Relationship problems
- Anxiety
- Disabilities
- Reactions to chronic illness
- School adjustment (including newcomer acculturation)
- Learning, attention & behavior problems

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